

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

COLERIDGEANA

THE ROAD TO XANADU

By John Livingston Lowes

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"All those who love real strangeness, as distinct from mere queerness, will enjoy walking along the road to Xanadu. They will walk with a poet, and with one of the few living writers capable of acting as *liaison* between the poet and the common mind. One of the most fascinating—and surely, too, one of the most important—books of literary criticism which have appeared for a long time."

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UNPUBLISHED LETTERS
of
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

INCLUDING CERTAIN LETTERS REPUBLISHED
FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES

Edited by
EARL LESLIE GRIGGS

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TO

NICHOLAS COLERIDGE

YOUNGEST DESCENDANT OF SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

THIS WORK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

I

SINCE the publication of Ernest Hartley Coleridge's *Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* in 1895, there has been no attempt either to collect the unpublished letters of Coleridge or to re-edit the numerous letters scattered through various publications from Coleridge's day to our own. E. H. Coleridge felt that the English reading public was apathetic toward Coleridge; but anticipating a revival of interest in his grandfather, he wrote in the introduction to his edition of Coleridge's letters: "A complete edition of Coleridge's Letters must await the 'coming of the milder day,' a renewed long-suffering on the part of his old enemy, the 'literary public.'" Though Coleridge's importance as a man of letters was recognized from the first, he was among the last of the Romantics to become the object of systematic research. Within the last few years, however, such exhaustive studies as J. Livingston Lowes' *The Road to Xanadu*, John H. Muirhead's *Coleridge as Philosopher*, and T. M. Raysor's *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism*, have revealed the varied and comprehensive nature of Coleridge's achievements. The present work is undertaken in the belief that Coleridge's unpublished letters not only confirm previous interpretations of the poet but also afford a fuller understanding of his thought and personality. While the *Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* is a praiseworthy edition, many of the letters herein included did not come under the notice of E. H. Coleridge; and many of those which were discarded are of interest now in a way that was inconceivable in 1895. The present undertaking is limited mainly to a selection of the unpublished letters because their vast number and intrinsic value seem unquestionably to justify immediate publication and because an edition of the entire correspondence cannot be brought to completion for a considerable number of years; but the unpublished correspondence brings to light much that is new to students of Coleridge, and is really

intended as an introduction to the complete edition of Coleridge's letters on which I am now engaged. •

Writing to his mother (Mrs. Derwent Coleridge) in November 1887, concerning Mrs. Sandford's proposal to publish the letters from Coleridge to Poole (*Thomas Coleridge and His Friends*, 1888), E. H. Coleridge says :

" All S.T.C.'s letters are like these. He wore his heart on his sleeve and knew nothing about the Gospel according to Tom Brown. My own belief is that by the publication of everything, S.T.C. would gain rather than lose. All his errors are known to the public and that he was guilty of them cannot be questioned. How much he struggled against them, and how he never gave up the battle of life, and how his sense of duty was inalienable, his conscience never wholly dead, is not known. Too much is made of his idleness and his want of independence. He worked much harder than most people and he never ceased to try and get his own living—never lived on his friends without an effort to fend for himself. But unless the whole man is revealed as he was this can never be understood. It is the Coleridge myth which has provoked the public into the constant sneers at his life and character. Traill [*Coleridge*, 1884] is just about the character—unappreciative about the literary position and power. The opium was never wholly given up—but it was greatly modified and comparatively became unimportant. As to Mrs. C. the truth is that he despaired of the business from the first, having been weakly driven into the engagement by Southey. After marriage he fell in love or fancied that he fell in love with her. But differences soon began and he came to hate his wife in a way that from his gentleness of nature is hard to understand. He took Miss Hutchinson as a kind of spiritual wife and for years his affections were centered on her."

Much of the injustice that has been done to Coleridge is due to an insufficient understanding of the man ; and his unpublished correspondence, as E. H. Coleridge maintains, goes a long way toward vindicating him.

The letters here published may conveniently be divided into three groups : literary, philosophical and theological, and personal. Letters containing literary criticism are not numerous, yet throughout his correspondence Coleridge

made casual critical remarks, ranging from a spirited but depreciatory analysis of Scott's *Lady of the Lake* and a humorous sally at the epics of Joseph Cottle, to acute observations on the English poets; and fragmentary as these criticisms are, they show Coleridge at his best.

While the letters containing critical remarks are seldom exclusively devoted to criticism and do not reveal Coleridge's whole intelligence, those dealing primarily with philosophy and theology are more consistent and less fragmentary. The development of Coleridge as a thinker is already well known, but his unpublished letters add considerably to an understanding of the progress of his thought. From an enthusiastic republican, he became a staunch supporter of the English constitution; from a zealous Unitarian preaching Hartleian and Spinozan doctrines, he became an anti-Dissenter and a metaphysical exponent of the Tri-unitarian Doctrine, and an interpreter of Kantianism; but hitherto it has been difficult to trace accurately the progress of Coleridge's thought. In a letter written to Thomas Clarkson in 1806, for instance, two years before the publication of the *Friend*, Coleridge answers, as clearly as he ever did, questions relative to the meaning of God, the Soul, and Death, showing how far he had advanced in theologico-metaphysical thought (to use his own phraseology) since his days in Germany.

The literary and philosophical value of Coleridge's unpublished letters is undeniable; but they are perhaps more interesting as documents of a human soul in its loftiest aspirations and its lowest despair. Coleridge was first and foremost a talker; his nature made it necessary for him to confide his inmost thoughts to someone, and when absence made oral disburdening impossible, he resorted to letters. Like the Ancient Mariner, Coleridge had to speak or write to someone when the spell was on him. Southey and Cottle enjoyed his earliest confidences; then Poole became his confidant; and so Coleridge wrote to Davy, to Wedgwood, to Wordsworth, to Beaumont, to Morgan, to Allsop—from the beginning of his life to its close he wrote long, intimate

letters of himself. Assuming that his friends must be interested in anything pertaining to himself, he wrote of what lay nearest his heart—his health, his domestic problems, his projected literary works, philosophy, animal magnetism, Greek accents—almost no other letters in an age given to introspection contain so much self-revelation as do those of Coleridge.

Coleridge understood himself perfectly, and with a psychological perspicacity that would do credit to the modern investigator he could, and did, lay bare the inner workings of his mind. Being a man of contradictions—of super-sensitiveness and sheer intellectuality, of self-reproach and self-justification, of rare intercourse with unreality and a sure sense of the practical—being both child and man, Coleridge in his letters presents the most amazing contrasts. Turning to the practical, he will detail to Southey, in a letter of soul-wearying length, the exact details of Greta Hall : the number of rooms, their size and outlook, the furniture, plans for sharing the house, where they should sleep—on and on, until one wonders if Southey even bothered to decipher the letter ; at the same time he will write a long critique of his metaphysical theories to the Wedgwoods, a letter of domestic complaints to Poole, and a wailing account of his health to Davy. Because they deal so fully with Coleridge's many and varied interests, these unpublished letters afford a far clearer view into the mind and heart of Samuel Taylor Coleridge than has hitherto been possible.

Specifically, the unpublished letters herein included add new biographical facts or throw further illumination over the whole of Coleridge's life and particularly in the following instances : the period of youthful enthusiasm, in which Coleridge's enlistment in the Dragoons, his pantisocratic proposals, and the story of his marriage are clearly set forth ; the period at Nether Stowey, when in spite of growing ill-health, an indulgence in opium, and a yielding to introspective self-pity, Coleridge was to produce most of his poetry and to attract a wide group of admirers ; the years

at Keswick, when Coleridge, torn by conflicting passions and ideals, attempted unsuccessfully to find himself; the seeking for health and spiritual re-birth in the voyage to Malta; the full story of the *Friend* and of the numerous lecture courses; the long period of despair (1811-1816) when Coleridge almost yielded body and soul to opium; the last years at Highgate, when Coleridge drew about him a group of enthusiastic followers—men like Frere, Tulk, J. H. Green, and H. N. Coleridge—and became an oracle for younger men interested in philosophy and theology. Considerable new light is thrown on Coleridge's opium habit. The letters relating to this habit range from the wild extravagance of opium dreams to the heart-rending outbursts of a man crying for succour; and one lays them down not merely tolerant of Coleridge, but deeply sympathetic with his misfortunes. The facts of Coleridge's marriage, explaining and justifying the actions of both Coleridge and his wife, are now completely given for the first time. It would be superfluous to detail the exact list of new biographical facts contributed by these letters; suffice it to say that Coleridge's relation to the more distinguished of his contemporaries, the various events of his life, and his importance in the development of English thought are more clearly brought forward.

The style of Coleridge's letters varies. Sometimes he wrote self-consciously and painstakingly, sometimes spontaneously and hastily. Coleridge the poet was obscured by Coleridge the philosopher. The best of his letters are unrivalled, but even the most abstruse reasonings or the most tedious passages dealing with health or with financial difficulties are interspersed with occasional sentences of figurative writing. This creative power rescues many of Coleridge's letters from the commonplace and often gives them a literary flavour. Having discussed the authorship of ΕΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ, for instance, in a letter to the Rev. S. Mence, Coleridge adds: "But so it is. Experience, like the stern lanthorn of a Ship, casts its light only on the Wake—on the Track already past."

II

The letters in this edition are taken from the original letters or from transcripts made by Ernest Hartley Coleridge, and the source is indicated at the beginning of each letter.

The circumstances relating to the transcripts of the original letters in this edition are as follows :

On the death of his father in 1883, Ernest Hartley Coleridge inherited the valuable collection of MSS., note-books, holograph letters, and miscellaneous papers left by Coleridge and other members of the family ; and he spent a good many years in organizing these materials for his unrealized biography of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Unfortunately, however, of the original letters once belonging to the Coleridge family, only a few are at present extant. A box, containing practically the whole of the MS. collection as well as many of his notes and relevant papers, was sent by E. H. Coleridge from London to Torquay ; but the box never reached its destination and the contents have never been recovered. This loss was a great shock to E. H. Coleridge, and so seriously interrupted his work that the delay and discouragement were in part responsible for the failure to complete a life of his grandfather. Years later he wrote of this misfortune in a letter preserved by the family, and mentions specifically the loss of certain holograph letters. Undoubtedly, most of Coleridge's letters to his wife, to his children, to Henry Nelson Coleridge, to Joseph Henry Green, to the Morgans, and others were among those lost, since no trace of them has come to light. A few letters to Derwent Coleridge, several fragments of letters to Mrs. S. T. Coleridge, and a miscellaneous group of letters are all that are now in the possession of the family. Deplorable as the loss of the Coleridge letters is, fortunately E. H. Coleridge had previously made transcripts of most of them. This detailed explanation is made in order to justify the inclusion in this edition of certain letters, the text of which is drawn from E. H. Coleridge's transcripts, rather than from originals.

In gathering materials for his projected life of his grandfather, E. H. Coleridge made every effort to trace letters outside the family collection, and transcribed several hundred letters which came under his notice. I have been able to collate a good many of his transcripts with the original letters, and except for minor changes in spelling and punctuation have found the text thoroughly reliable. In a few cases, when the original letters were not made available, I have also used his transcripts.

Where it was possible to draw the text from original sources I have included certain letters which have been previously published in books long out of print (such as *Fragmentary Remains of Sir Humphry Davy* and *Letters, Conversations and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*); others which have been privately printed (such as *Letters from the Lake Poets* and *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*); others which have been published only in part (such as those in *Thomas Poole and His Friends*); and still others which have appeared in obscure periodicals or in scholarly journals.

Cottle, in his two publications (*Early Recollections* and *Reminiscences*), took such unjustifiable liberties with the text of Coleridge's letters—changing or supplying dates, omitting or adding the names of persons, and deliberately falsifying or unnecessarily amending the text—that his books are absolutely unreliable; and I have, therefore, reprinted from the holograph manuscripts a number of Coleridge's letters to Cottle.

Only two letters which appeared in *Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* are included; both these letters were printed only in part by E. H. Coleridge and are now reproduced in full from the originals.

Whenever a letter has been previously published a bibliographical reference to the first publication is given. References to Turnbull's *Biographia Epistolaris* are not made, because the entire text of that edition is taken from published sources. The bibliography of Coleridge's published letters is immense; and though I have endeavoured to republish

no letters without indicating where they first appeared, it is probable that certain sources have eluded me.

The letters are printed exactly as they were written. Coleridge's punctuation is somewhat erratic, and when he uses two or three marks instead of one, I have deleted the unnecessary ones. The use of 'it's' and 'your's' for 'its' and 'yours' is retained; but the abbreviations '&' and '&c' are expanded into 'and' and 'etc.'

Coleridge's use of initial capital letters is inconsistent. Coleridge said he preferred the German method of using capital letters for all nouns; but he himself did not consistently capitalize them. Often he seems to have used capital letters for emphasis, instead of underscoring words. The capital letters are printed as Coleridge used them.

While Coleridge's orthography is fairly consistent, his spelling sometimes varies from modern usage. He usually omits the 'u' in such words as labour, colour, honour, etc. He nearly always writes Wedgwood and Montagu as 'Wedgewood' and 'Montague'; and he frequently used only one 'l' in Gillman. Edinburgh he seems always to have spelled 'Edingburgh.' Shakespeare he spells in at least three ways, 'Shakespear' appearing most often. There are certain variations in his spelling of such words as complete, show, etc. Coleridge's spellings are reproduced save where (as in the case of 'Edingburgh') the misspelling is disconcerting.

Where the text is taken from E. H. Coleridge's transcripts I have printed it exactly as there given, but E. H. Coleridge modernized a few spellings, corrected punctuation, and lowered the case of many common nouns, so that the text of the letters taken from transcripts is somewhat inconsistent with that of the letters taken from original sources. It seemed desirable, however, not to tamper either with the text of the original letters or with that of the transcripts made by E. H. Coleridge.

At the heading of each letter I have given the name of Coleridge's correspondent, followed in italics by the address

as Coleridge gave it. The date is given at the beginning of the letter for the sake of uniformity ; when the date is from the postmark or is conjectured, it is placed in brackets. The problem of determining where a letter was written, if Coleridge does not give such information, is extremely difficult. At certain periods in his life, Coleridge moved about so rapidly that it is sometimes almost impossible to trace his steps. To be sure, a legible postmark may give a hint ; but Coleridge's letters were not necessarily posted where they were written and frequently the postmark is incomplete or not decipherable. Rather than risk false suppositions or make conjectures only in certain cases, I have indicated the place from which the letter was written only when this information is supplied by Coleridge.

The letters are printed in full, with very few exceptions. Occasionally Coleridge repeated himself, and long passages in one letter correspond almost exactly to those in another. Having an inordinate interest in his health, he often filled huge folio sheets with minute and wearisome observations on his physical condition. To print all passages of this nature would tend to make portions of this work unreadable. I have therefore made a few omissions where it seemed advisable. Every omission is indicated, and the omitted material is usually summarized in a footnote.

The annotations have been made as brief as possible, but the complex nature of Coleridge's biography makes it necessary to clarify certain points of importance. Information is added under the following heads : the sources of holograph letters or of transcripts from which the text of the letter is taken ; references to published works, either by Coleridge or about him, which are of importance to the student ; biographical or other information about Coleridge or his contemporaries. Those who wish to supplement the letters with a biographical account will find J. Dykes Campbell's *Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a Narrative of the Events of his Life*, 1894 (which is included in the

Globe Edition of Coleridge's *Poems*), to be the most complete study.

III

The present undertaking could not have been accomplished without the unstinted generosity and helpfulness of the Rev. G. H. B. Coleridge, great-grandson of the poet. He has not only placed at my disposal the vast collection of Coleridge papers in his possession, but he and Mrs. Coleridge have been the kindest and most indulgent of friends. Their many services to me I cannot repay, but can merely record with a deep sense of gratitude.

To the Administrators of the Faculty Research Fund of the University of Michigan, and to the American Council of Learned Societies, I am indebted for grants made to assist in the expensive work of assembling material ; and to the Board of Regents and the Graduate School of the University of Michigan I am indebted for a Lloyd Travelling Fellowship, which has made possible a full and uninterrupted year in England. Without such support my undertaking would have been delayed indefinitely.

I gratefully acknowledge the courtesy of the Trustees and Librarians of the British Museum, the Bodleian Library, the Dr. Williams's Library, the Edinburgh University Library, the John Rylands Library, Manchester, the Bristol Central Public Library, the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, the Library of Jesus College, Cambridge, the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Royal Institute, the South Kensington Museum, the Harvard College Library, the Yale University Library, the Lehigh University Library, the Texas University Library, the Pierpont Morgan Library, the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, the Drexel Institute, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the New York Public Library. I am especially indebted to Mr. Stephen K. Jones of the Dr. Williams's Library, to Mr. Ralph Cory of the Royal Institute, and to Mr. Victor H.

Paltsits, of the New York Public Library, who have been especially helpful. To Mr. H. M. Cashmore I am indebted not only for assistance in the Birmingham Public Libraries, but for valuable help in tracing certain Coleridge manuscripts.

Of the manuscript collectors, Mr. Owen D. Young of New York City, Captain (now Admiral) F. L. Pleadwell of Washington, D.C., and Mr. T. J. Wise, Mr. R. N. Carew Hunt, and Mr. H. T. Butler of London, have kindly assisted me by sending photostats or verified transcripts of the Coleridge letters in their possession.

Three prominent booksellers, Goodspeed's Bookshop of Boston, Thomas F. Madigan of New York City, and C. A. Stonehill of London, have kindly permitted me to make use of the Coleridge letters they have in stock.

To those who have Coleridge letters as family heirlooms, I am personally deeply indebted. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the generosity of the Misses Florence M. and Eleanor Bairdsmith for letters to De Quincey ; of the late Major Frank Wedgwood and his nephew, Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, for letters to the Wedgwoods ; of Mrs. Vaughan Williams for letters to the Wedgwoods ; of Colonel H. G. Sotheby for letters to William Sotheby ; of Mr. Gordon Wordsworth for a letter to the Wordsworth family and valuable notes concerning it ; of Mrs. M. M. Linnell for a letter to Thomas Clarkson ; of the Rev. Canon G. W. Daniell for letters to Mrs. Rogers ; of Mr. A. H. Hallam Murray for letters to the Morgans ; of Colonel John Murray for letters to Byron and to Murray ; of Mr. Geoffrey Keynes for a letter to Hunt ; of Mrs. Helen G. Eggar for a letter to Cottle ; of Professor T. O. Mabbot for a letter to an unnamed correspondent ; of the grand-daughters of Thomas Allsop for letters to Allsop ; of Mr. John B. Chubb for a letter to Chubb ; of Professor John D. Rea for a letter to Hessey ; of Lord Ernle for a letter to Cottle ; of Miss Alice G. Smith for letters to Poole ; of Mr. Henry C. Shelley for letters to Taylor and Hessey ; of Mrs. W. K. Denison for a letter to Marmaduke Hart ; of the Rev. Canon W. C.

Crompton for letters to Miss Eliza Nevins. The originals of these Coleridge letters have been unhesitatingly placed at my disposal, and this interest and generosity have greatly increased the scope of my work.

Among those who have aided me I am greatly indebted to Mr. John F. Lockwood of University College, London, and to Professor Warren E. Blake of the University of Michigan, for assistance in connection with the Greek and Latin passages in the Coleridge letters ; to Professor J. Livingston Lowes for helpful criticism and for assistance in gathering materials ; to Professor George M. Harper for notes relative to the letters to Estlin ; to Mr. Edmund Blunden for many important suggestions and several bibliographical items ; to Professor Thomas M. Raysor for valuable co-operation ; to Professor Ernest de Selincourt for suggestions about editorial policy ; to Sir Augustus Bartello, the Acting Prime Minister at Malta, and Professor Scicluna for aid in investigating the public records at Malta ; and to Professor Edith J. Morley, Dr. Edwin A. Peck, Dr. Garland Greever, Dr. Stanley Thomas, Professor H. A. Eaton, Mr. Roger Ingpen, and Major Leonard Darwin.

Most of all I am indebted to my wife. Her work has been of such a nature as to make this undertaking almost a collaboration.

Finally, I wish to record my deep sense of obligation to my colleagues at the University of Michigan, especially to Dean G. Carl Huber, Dr. John Sundwall, Professor Louis A. Strauss, Professor Oscar J. Campbell, and Professor Paul Mueschke.

EARL LESLIE GRIGGS.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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LETTER I

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This is the first unpublished letter which has come under my notice. For earlier letters (including the autobiographical series to Poole) see *Letters*, i. 3-33. Most of Coleridge's letters home were written to his brother, the Rev. George Coleridge (1764-1828).]

[*October, 1791.*]

DEAR BROTHER

As I am now settled in my rooms, and as College Business is commenced, I shall be able to give you some little account of matters. We go to Chapel twice a day. Every time we miss, we pay twopence, and fourpence on Surplice days, id est, Sundays, Saints' days and the eves of Saints' days. I am remarkably religious on an economical plan.

We have mathematical lectures, once a day, Euclid and Algebra alternately. I read Mathematics three hours a day, by which means I am always considerably before the lectures, which are very good ones. Classical lectures we have had none yet, nor shall I be often *bored* with them. They are seldom given, and when given, very thinly attended. After tea (N.B. sugar is very dear) I read classics till I go to bed, viz., eleven o'clock. If I were to read on as I do now, there is not the least doubt, that I should be classical medallist and a very high Wrangler; but *freshmen* always *begin* very *furiously*. I am reading Pindar, and composing Greek verse like a mad dog. I am very fond of Greek verse, and shall try hard for the Brown's Prize Ode. At my leisure hours I translate Anacreon. I have translated the first, the second, the 28th, the 32nd, the 43rd and the 46th Odes. Middleton¹ thinks I have translated the 32nd ἄγε ζωγράφων ἄριστε very well. I think between us both we might translate him entirely. You *have* translated six or 7, have you not?

¹ Thomas Fanshaw Middleton (1769-1822), a fellow student of Coleridge's at Christ's Hospital and Cambridge (Pembroke College), later became Bishop of Calcutta.

Dr. Pierce¹ is not come up to College yet. The Rustat Scholarship² will be worth to me 27 pound a year. There is a new regulation at our College, they tell me, that, without any exception, the man who takes the highest honours in his year of the candidates, is to be elected Fellow. This will be a bit of a stimulus to my exertions.

There is no such thing as *discipline* at our College. There was once, they say, but so long ago that no one remembers it. Dr. Pierce, if I am not very much misinformed, will introduce it with a vengeance this year. We have had so very large an admittance that it will be absolutely necessary.

We do one declamation every term—two are spoken in a week, one English, one Latin. Consequently, when the college was very thin, the men were pestered with two or three in a term. Themes and verses are in disuse at our College. Whether the doctor intends to reintroduce them or no, I cannot tell.

I have a most violent cold in my head, a favour which I owe to the dampness of my rooms. The Rustat Scholarship depends in some measure upon residence; otherwise it would be worth thirty pound a year to me. But I should lose by this gain; while in the country, I can be at no expense; but unnecessary residence is a very *costly* thing.

Le Grice³ will send me a parcel in a few days. Pray let me hear from you.

My compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow⁴ and believe me with love and gratitude

Yours

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Dr. Pearce, the Master. Coleridge spells the name both 'Pierce' and 'Pearce.'

² The Rustat Scholarship was granted by Jesus College to sons of clergymen and amounted to about £25.

³ C. V. Le Grice (1773-1858), who in 1834 published *College Reminiscences of Coleridge* (*Gentleman's Magazine*), and his brother were at Christ's Hospital and Cambridge with Coleridge.

⁴ Mr. Sparrow was the Headmaster of Newcome's Academy at Clapton near Hackney, where George Coleridge was assistant master. See *Letters*, i, 25.n.

LETTER 2

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

[*Postmark Nov. 28, 1791.*]

MY DEAR BROTHER

I am very much distressed on account of your illness : I can form some idea of your sufferings from what I have seen my brother James ¹ suffer, when spasmodically affected. I hope to God, the spitting of blood has ceased. You should not take much animal food, nor any violent exercise. I should have written you on the receipt of your letter, had it not found me nailed to my bed with a fit of the rheumatism. Yesterday I exhibited my first resurrexit. I am very weak and have a disagreeable *tearing* pain in my head, when I move. I was very unwell, when I wrote last to you ; but the day after I grew so much worse, that I was obliged to take to my bed. Cambridge is a damp place—the very palace of the winds : so without very great care one is sure to have a violent cold. I am not however certain, that I do not owe my rheumatism to the dampness of my rooms. Opium never used to have any disagreeable effects on me ²—but it has on many.

After I had last written you, there were one or two sentences in Ned's ³ letter which then hurt me so much, that this cooperating with my feverish state of body and mind produced a letter "*paulo iracundior*." I was afterwards so sensible of my folly in this, that I should have written him again to have begged his pardon for it, but I was unable. I received a very kind answer from Ned. In the former part of it he writes in a violent style, and then very good-naturedly desires me to observe what Anti-graces a letter written in the first impulse of passion possesses. Yesterday not without much

¹ Colonel James Coleridge (1759-1836), Coleridge's elder brother, head of the family after the death of their father, the Rev. John Coleridge, in 1781.

² This is the first reference made by Coleridge to opium ; the sentence was quoted by E. H. Coleridge in a footnote : *Letters*, i. 173 n.

³ Edward Coleridge (1760-1843), one of Coleridge's elder brothers.

effort I wrote him such a letter, as will, I hope, utterly erase from his memory my late effusions of petulance and passion.

My dear brother, I assure you, I am an economist. I keep no company ; that is, I neither give or receive invitations to wine parties ; because in our college there are no end of them. I eat no suppers. Middleton acts to me with great friendship. While I was confined to my bed, though he was reading for an Act, and could ill spare his time, he yet came, and sat with me often. After he has taken his degree, he has promised to read Mathematics with me, which will be of infinite service to me. As I had got before my lectures, my illness has not thrown me behind them. We have not had a classical lecture yet. Dr. Pierce is not come to College yet. I have by me two original little Odes of . . . ¹ they are very elegant, and will please you. They were never published. My compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow. As I know Mr. Sparrow likes a good thing, you will communicate to him this epigram made lately by a man of Trinity upon a little garden belonging to Dr. Joett, a man of small stature.

This little garden little Joett made,
And fenc'd it with a little palisade ; .
A little taste hath little Joett,
This little garden doth a little shew it.

AN EPITAPH ON MR. MORE.

Here lies More—no more is he :
More and no more ! how can that be ?

We have had a dreadful circumstance at Cambridge. Two men of Pembroke quarrelled, went to Newmarket, and the challenger was killed. A fellow of one college made a very just observation, that formerly students of Colleges were censur'd for being pedants—but that now they were too much men of the world.

I hope, when I next hear from you, to find your health perfectly reestablished. In the meantime believe me with love and gratitude

Your affec. broth.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ MS. torn.

LETTER 3

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

July 13, 1792.

DEAR GEORGE

Here I am, videlicet, Salisbury, arrived on Wednesday Night, and am in good health and spirits. My brother Edward is well, if you except a Punnomania with which he at present foams—His puns are very bad—of this he is conscious and therefore unwilling to allow merit to those of others. I hope, that the cold-sprung luminary has ceased to irradiate your left cheek. Mrs. E. Coleridge made particular enquiries after your health. She calls you her *friend*. I sate down to write you with a whole ocean of communicables in my head, but alas ! for the evaporation ! And I find the Muse as coy in her visitations as the Epistolary Spirit. I shall be with my Brother James on Monday. My reasons for leaving Salisbury are, that if I do not visit my brother James now, I shall not be able to do it at any future period, on account of his Sidmouthianism ; so my plan or Edward's is, that I am to return to Salisbury when you return from Devon from which place I shall write you more copiously. I anticipate your arrival at Ottery. Your presence, like the Sun will relax the frost of my genius, and like a cathartic, purify it of all obstructions, so that I expect to flow away in a bloody flux of poetry. N.B. Ned never *reasons*, but he argumentates thro' the medium of similies. By the bye I compared the carbuncle on your cheek to the star of Venus passing over the disk of the Sun. In Devonshire I shall write Mr. Sparrow.

God love you.

Yours ever,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Edward's love. N.B. Ned has proposed an *in melius* to my similie by comparing your carbuncle to an *ignis fatuus* passing over a dunghill.

LETTER 4

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, Hackney.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday Morning.[*Postmark August 9, 1792.*]

Had I not entered into a most bloody cutthroat resolution to write you, my dear brother, I could find two very good excuses for omitting it, the having nothing to say, and a pen so execrably bad, as to discompose most grievously the epistolary part of my nervous system. I left Tiverton on Wednesday, and migrated from Ottery to Exeter on Saturday; and there I am, at present very happy, and (exceptis Cloacinae templis infaustissimis) very comfortable. All are well and all desire their love to you. Mother I left well, and Mrs. Hodge etc., etc. I rather wonder at my not having heard from you. This will be the third letter, which you will have received from me. But I complain not, knowing the multiplicity of your avocations. James is at Sidmouth. Little Betsy looks like Hebe after her marriage with Hercules: seriously speaking, the little maid looks charmingly. I hope you will be quite well, when you come into Devonshire, for I have promised myself a vast deal of snug comfortability with you. I have nothing more to say, so shall fill up the Letter with a simile, which I wrote after an evening walk before supper—I had met Smerdon¹ and spouse.

Tho' much averse at folk to flicker,
 To find a simile for Vicar
 I've made thro' Earth and Air and Sea
 A voyage of Discovery.
 And let me add (to ward off strife)
 For Vicar and for Vicar's Wife
 Etc.—

Love to Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow. God love you and your
 S. T. C.

¹ The Rev. Fulwood Smerdon, who became Vicar of Ottery St. Mary on the death of the Rev. John Coleridge in 1781. For the lines that follow and for the poem written on Smerdon's death see *Poems*, 37 and 76.

LETTER 5

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Sunday Evening
Novembr. 18, 1792.

MY DEAR BROTHER

I have sent for your minutest examination the Latin letter which I am to send to each of my examiners.¹ If there be the least inaccuracy in it, let it not escape your microscopic eye, for I should be sorry to offend in the vestibule of my examination. So, my dear brother, whet the knife of criticism upon the sole of affection, and sit down *at* it with anticipative grin, like a monthly reviewer preparing to cut up a limb of Orthodoxy.

I am sorry to add, that my health is considerably impaired, and my face, a soil at all times more favorable to the crocus than the rose, looks at present peculiarly sepulchral. If possible, answer my letter by return of post, and believe me

With affection and gratitude,

Yours most sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Respects to Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow. Remember me to Stephens.

LETTER 6

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter must have been written in 1793, for Francis Coleridge died in India in February, 1792, and Coleridge could not have known of his death so soon. The decayed tooth is mentioned in a letter to Mrs. Evans on February 5, 1793, *Letters*, i. 45.

February 9 [1793].

MY DEAR BROTHER

A little more than a fortnight ago a quantity of matter chose to form in the socket of a decayed tooth, and brought

¹ In reference to Coleridge's competition for the Craven Scholarship. See Letter number 7 [June, 1793].

with [it] such violent swelling, inflammation and other paraphernalia of pain, as threw me into a fever ; but God be praised ! my gum has at last been opened, my tooth drawn, and this is the fifth day of my convalescence.¹

I have been very faulty in omitting to write Dr. Layard : ² this post shall rectify the error, as far as it can be rectified. Dr. Pearce, as if fearful lest I should *transfer* my gratitude, took infinite pains to convince me, that Dr. L's recommendation had not at all influenced him : nay, he seemed almost offended at my having applied to any but himself. This, as you may suppose, I mean to be *inter nos*—Dr. L. has every possible claim on my thanks.

Poor Francis ! ³ I have shed the tear of natural affection over him. He was the only one of my Family, whom similarity of ages made more peculiarly my brother. He was the hero of all the little tales, that make the remembrance of my earliest days interesting ! Yet his Death filled me rather with melancholy than anguish. I quitted Ottery, when I was so young, that most of those [en]dearing circumstances that are wont to render the scenes and companions of our childhood delightful in the recollection, I have associated with the place of my education, and when at last I revisited Devon, the manners of the inhabitants annihilated whatever tender ideas of pleasure my fancy rather than my memory had pictured to my expectation. I found them (almost universally) to be gross without openness, and cunning without refinement.

¹ This is one of a multitude of passages relating to Coleridge's health. A short period in a hospital with his brother Luke (*Life*, 12-13), added to what was apparently a natural interest in medicine, gave Coleridge sufficient technical knowledge and vocabulary to analyse with considerable success his own physical condition ; and throughout his long life he was wont to write fully and minutely of himself. The mass of evidence before me tends to prove that Coleridge was no mere hypochondriac, but a life-long sufferer from disease, and that often his failure to fulfil his promise as a man of genius was due to physical causes beyond his control. This is not the place to discuss the relation between Coleridge's physical condition and his slavery to opium : suffice to say here that *at worst* a diseased constitution was unwisely aggravated by the misuse of opiates.

² Dr. Layard, 1731-1802, an eminent physician.

³ Francis Coleridge, 1770-1792.

But of the state of my feelings with regard to my brothers James and Edward, how shall I speak with Truth, yet Delicacy? I will open my whole heart to you. Fraternal affection is the offspring of long habit and of reflection. But when I first went into the country, I had scarcely seen either James or Edward. They had neither been the companions of or the guardians of my childhood. To love them therefore was a sensation yet to be learned—to be learned at an age, when my best affections had been forestalled; and, when long wont to admire and esteem the few, I loved, I deemed admiration and esteem necessary parts in the constitution of affection. I soon perceived, that Edward never thought, that all his finer feelings were the children of accident, and that even these capricious sensibilities were too often swallowed in the vanity of appearing great to little people.

In my brother James I recognised a man of reflection and *therefore* of virtue. But as the object of that reflection was from his peculiar situation necessarily himself, I saw or thought I saw, an interested somewhat, a too great attention to external appearances, a warmth in his own concerns, a coldness in those, that related to others, which seemed to render him unapt to be beloved. Add to this, that both the one and the other exacted a deference, which conscious of few obligations to *them*, aware of no *real* inferiority, and laughing at the artificial claims of primogeniture, I felt myself little inclined to pay. However I will write to them. I will assume the semblance of affection. Perhaps, by persevering in appearing, I at last shall learn to be a brother. I have taken your advice with regard to the mourning: when perfectly convenient to you, I shall accept your offer of the note with gratitude.

Believe your most affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 7

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Ottery, St. Mary, Devon.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published in "Coleridge the Dragoon," E. L. Griggs, *Modern Philology*, vol. xxviii. No. 4 (May, 1931).]

[February, 1793.]

DEAR BROTHER

Our fate is at last decided ; and I, as I expected, in the number of the unsuccessful ! After an examination ¹ of six days' continuance our number was reduced from seventeen to four. The survivors were Bethel ² and Keate ³ of King's, Butler ⁴ of St. John's and myself. We then underwent a different process of examination, after which the Vice-chancellor sent for Butler and informed him, that between those, who had been dismissed, and the four, who had been retained, the distinction was wide and marked ; but that we had proved so very equal that the examiners were long undecided, but had at last determined in his favour, because from his age he deserved it the most (he is the youngest of us) and because they thought him the *most proper* to receive it. I believe, he is a Sizar. As to myself I am perfectly satisfied both with the mode of examination and the event of it ; but our Master, Dr. Pierce, who conceives the most hyperbolic ideas of my abilities, and had entertained the most sanguine expectation of my success, is sadly chagrined—nay, he went so far, as to tell me in confidence, that I had not had fair play. "No composition in Greek Prose, none in Greek Verse, no original English composition ! You would have beat them hollow, I know you would," etc. But I have no reason to complain, as, if you except the above mentioned articles, I verily believe we

¹ For another account by Coleridge of this examination for the Craven Scholarship, see *Letters*, i. 45-46.

² "The candidate was Mr. Bethel, one of the members for Yorkshire, and not the Bishop of Bangor." Gillman, J., *Life of Coleridge*, 50 n.

³ John Keate (1773-1852), later Headmaster of Eton, successfully competed for the Craven Scholarship the following year.

⁴ Samuel Butler (1774-1835), later Bishop of Coventry, was the father of Samuel Butler, the novelist.

circumnavigated the Encyclopaedia. So very severe an examination was never remembered. I have this oil to pour into the wound of my vanity : my information is certain and authentic that the most elegant scholar among the examiners gave a decided vote in my favor. Dr. Pierce has given me the Librarian and Chapel clerk's Place. It is worth thirty-three pound a year ; but then I cannot be absent from chapel above three or four times a week, and I must get up to Chapel almost every morning ; but all good things have their contingencies of evil.

I am now employing myself *omni marte* in translating the best lyric poems from the Greek, and the modern Latin Writers, which I mean, in about half-a-year's time, to publish by subscription.¹ By means of Caldwell,² Tuckett,³ and Middleton I can ensure more than two hundred subscribers ; so that this and frugality will enable me to pay my debts, which have corroded my spirits greatly for some time past. I owe about fifty pounds to my Tutor, and above eight pounds elsewhere. The debt to my Tutor is entirely the arrears of my two first Quarters, and I have owed it to him ever since. My income from the school is forty pounds, from the Rustat Scholarship this year it will be about twenty-three pounds, or perhaps a little more ; from the Chapel Clerkship thirty-two pounds. And as I eat no supper or tea, and keep little company my expenses this year, *excluding* travelling into Devonshire, will be about fifty pounds, so that I shall be nearly twenty-five pounds plus. My commons I have for nothing, they being included in the Chapel Clerkship, so that it is little expense to be resident. I think therefore of staying all the summer in Cambridge,

¹ This work was never published.

² "The Rev. George Caldwell was afterwards Fellow and Tutor of Jesus College. His name occurs among the list of subscribers to the original issue of *The Friend*." *Letters*, i. 25 n.

³ G. L. Tuckett, who was later to disclose to the Coleridge family the fact that Coleridge had enlisted in the army. I have been unable to learn anything more of him than that he was presumably "a college acquaintance [of Coleridge's] . . . [who] . . . was reading for the Bar." *Letters*, i. 57 n.

which will increase my Rustat Scholarship to thirty pounds. Such are my accounts. I have been lesson'd by the wholesome discipline of experience, that *Nemo felix qui debet* and I hope that I shall be the happier man for it.

I trust that your indisposition has been completely removed by the peace and quiet of Ottery. My anxiety concerning the scholarship did not so insulate me, but that my fancy frequently wandered there. The state of your health indeed, when you quitted Hackney, was such as demanded solitude.

Pray let me hear from you as soon as possible. Give my duty to my mother, whom I will write in a few days, and my love to my sister, my compliments to Mrs. Hodge, etc. etc. ; and believe me with affection

Your grateful and obliged

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 8

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Partly published in "Coleridge the Dragoon," E. L. Griggs, *Modern Philology*, vol. xxviii. No. 4 (May, 1931).] On December 2, 1793, pressed by his college debts and scarce knowing what to do, Coleridge enlisted under the name of Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke in the 15th or King's Regiment of Light Dragoons. On learning of his plight, his family immediately took steps to procure his release, and he was discharged on April 7, 1794.

Sunday night, Feb. 23, 1794.

My Brother would have heard from me long ere this had I not been unwell, unwell indeed—I verily thought, that I was hastening to that quiet Bourne, where grief is hush'd—And when my recovered strength would have enabled me to have written to you, so utterly dejected were my spirits, that my letter would have displayed such a hoplessness of all future comfort, as would have approached to ingratitude—

Pardon me, my more than Brother ! if it be the sickly jealousy of a mind sore in the "self-contracted miseries", but was your last letter written in the same tone of tenderness with your former ! Ah me ! what awaits me from within

and without, after the first tumult of Pity shall have subsided— Well were it, if the consciousness of having merited it, could arm my heart to the patient endurance of it—

Sweet in the sight of God and celestial Spirits are the tears of Penitance—the pearls of heaven—the wine of Angels ! Such has been the language of Divines, but Divines have exaggerated. Repentance may bestow that tranquillity, which will enable man to pursue a course of undeviating harmlessness, but it cannot restore to the mind that inward sense of Dignity, which is the Parent of every kindling energy ! I am not what I was :—*Disgust*—I *feel*, as if I had jaundiced all my Faculties.

I laugh almost like an insane person when I cast my eye backward on the prospect of my past two years. What a gloomy *Huddle* of eccentric actions, and dim-discovered motives ! To real happiness I bade adieu from the moment, I received my first 'Tutors' Bill' ; since that time, since that period my mind has been irradiated by Bursts only of sunshine, at all other times gloomy with clouds, or turbulent with tempests. Instead of manfully disclosing the disease, I concealed it with a shameful cowardice of sensibility, till it cankered my very Heart. I became a proverb to the University for Idleness. The time, which I should have bestowed on the academic studies, I employed in dreaming out wild schemes of impossible extrication. It had been better for me, if my Imagination had been less vivid. I could not with such facility have shoved aside Reflection ! How many and how many hours have I stolen from the bitterness of Truth in these soul-enervating Reveries—in building magnificent edifices of Happiness on some fleeting shadow of Reality ! My affairs became more and more involved. I fled to Debauchery ; fled pure silent and solitary Anguish to all the uproar of senseless mirth. Having, or imagining that I had, no *stock* of Happiness to which I could look forward, I seized the empty gratifications of the moment, and snatched at the Foam, as the wave passed by me. I feel a painful blush on my cheek, while I write it, but even for the Un. Scholarship, for which I affected to have read so severely, I did not read

three days uninterruptedly—for the whole six weeks, that preceded the examination, I was almost constantly intoxicated ! My Brother ! you shudder as you read.

When the state of my affairs became known to you and by your exertions and my Brothers' generous Confidence a fair Road seemed open to extrication, Almighty God ! what a sequel ! I loitered away more money on the road, and in town than it was possible for me to justify to my Conscience ; and when I returned to Cambridge a multitude of petty embarrassments buzzed round me, like a nest of Horpets, Embarrassments, which in my wild carelessness I had forgotten, and many of which I had contracted almost without knowing it. So small a sum remained, that I could not mock my Tutor with it. My agitations were delirium— I formed a Party, dashed to London at eleven o'clock at night, and for three days lived in all the tempest of Pleasure—resolved on my return—but I will not shock your religious feelings. I again returned to Cambridge—staid a *week*—such a week ! Where Vice has not annihilated sensibility, there is little need of a Hell ! On Sunday night I packed up a few things, went off in the mail, staid about a week in a strange way, still looking forward with a kind of recklessness to the *dernier ressort* of misery—an accident of a very singular kind prevented me, and led me to adopt my present situation—where what I have suffered—but enough, may he, who in mercy dispenseth anguish be gracious to me.

Ulcera possessis alte suffusa medullis Non levioꝛe manu, ferro sanantur et igni. Ne noceat frustra mox eruptura cicatrix. Ad vivum penetrant flammæ, quo funditus humor. Defluat, et vacuis corrupto sanguine venis Exundet fons ille mali— Claud. [xx. 13.]¹

I received a letter from Tiverton on Thursday full of wisdom, and tenderness and consolation. I answered it immediately. Let me have the comfort of hearing from you. I will write again to-morrow night.

S. T. C.

¹ Claudian, *In Eutropium*, ii. 13. Coleridge reads 'exundet' for 'arescat' and 'ille' for 'ipse.'

LETTER 9

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

*Henley,
Thursday night, [Feb. 27, 1794.]*

MY DEAR BROTHER

Your letter rekindled my hopes of myself. With every motive, that dear bought experience, that overwhelmed gratitude can suggest, I must be indeed a monster of imbecillity to relapse or be stationary in the road of well-doing ! Let me build confidence on humility.

I owe my shoemaker at Cambridge three pounds, and I owe my Taylor a bill of what amount I am not positively accurate, but to the best of my remembrance it is about ten pounds. Besides these, I owe nothing.

Rather a disagreeable circumstance has happened to me here. When I first became resident near the poor house an attendant on the sick man,¹ for a few days I procured and dressed my own food. But my going backwards and forwards to the House being offensive and dangerous to the uninfected, the Mistress of the Workhouse continued to send me down my dinner. I begged leave to pay her regularly as for my board—she would not hear of it, and told me I was extremely welcome : it was a trifle that made no perceivable difference in her large family. I accepted her offer, and spent my weekly stipend on the additional comforts I so much wanted. At the end of the month, being to-day, a bill is prepared on the Army accounts for my board—the Governors of the Workhouse having heard, that I had received my food constantly, and the mistress of the House being desperately sick in bed. This bill I must prevent from being presented. For board and washing they have charged me for the month twenty-three shillings, and this I must apply to you for. I must settle it on Saturday, as on that

¹ As a part of his 'duties' as a Dragoon, Coleridge spent several weeks in the Henley Workhouse Hospital nursing a comrade who was ill with smallpox.

day I quit Henley for High Wickham in Oxfordshire. I have received a letter from my brother James with an account of the steps which are taken for my liberation. God bless him ! I did not think it was so late. I conclude hastily, that I may perform my resolution of writing my honoured Parent, and my brother Edward. God preserve you.

Your obliged and grateful Brother,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 10

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney, London.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

[*March 8th, 1794.*]

MY DEAR BROTHER

By the advice of the Cornet, to whom on not receiving a letter from you on Saturday I applied, I have suffered the bill to go to the Adjutant. The Cornet advises me to explain the matter to the Adjutant, but to have the money ready for discharging the bill. I moved from Henley on Saturday, on the Baggage Cart. It rained a mizzling rain the whole journey, which though but twelve miles took us four hours ; so that I feel all over me a violent cold, and a feverette. But it will soon go off, I trust. My present address is,

The Compasses.

High Wycombe

Bucks.

Your direction though corruptly spelt etc. answered. You may with perfect assurance of safety enclose the money in a letter to me ; unless you have an opportunity of sending me a parcel by any of the numerous coaches passing through Wycombe. But none pass your way, and a letter is equally a safe vehicle.

My present situation is indeed fatiguing, and involves a long et cetera of disagreeables ; but to me, who have suffered so acutely from the diseases of the inward man, externals

have lost much of the formidable. I hear from Allen,¹ that Le Grice has discovered my present situation (from Tuckett I suppose) and was then on his journey to Henley. I am sorry for this on many accounts.

The moments I can abstract from more interesting and more intrusive thoughts I am dedicating to the Cambridge Odes. Whatever be my lot with respect to College, *this* can do me no harm and by amusing me certainly does me some good. Whate'er betide some solace I have won—Farewell my dear Brother—I pray that I may be sometime in mind as well as in kin, your Brother S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER II

To GEORGE CORNISH, *Great George Street, Westminster.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, "Coleridge the Dragoon," *Modern Philology*, vol. xxviii. No. 4, May, 1931. I have been unable to identify George Cornish, to whom this letter is addressed. Evidently he was rather well acquainted with Coleridge's personal affairs. The following quotation is from an interesting letter from George Cornish to his wife, in which he describes minutely how he found Coleridge among the Dragoons.

"At Reading it occurred to me that I might probably find out Sam Coleridge. Say not a word about it as the family may think me meddling, but I felt a sort of attachment for him and therefore endeavoured to find him out—for which purpose I spoke to many of the dragoons, who knew of no such name. At last a well-spoken man described to me Sam Coleridge, conceiving him to be the man I meant—but says he, Sir, if I tell him there is a gentleman wants to see him he will not come. I will make some excuse to bring him this way in five minutes. I saw the man with another coming towards me, when to my infinite surprize I saw Sam Coleridge full accoutred as a dragoon. The moment he saw me he turned away. I called to him; he then stopped. We walked together along the street, but it was some minutes before he spoke to me: he seemed much agitated. After a little time he discovered I did not mean to insult his misfortunes, but to alleviate them if I could; he gave me a little detail of his sufferings, but he says they are not half enough to expiate his follies. The soldier told me he received half a guinea a week and a newspaper daily, but he told me he had had assistance refused. Whether his brothers mean to punish him or whether they have not sufficient interest to procure his discharge, I know not; but he is not discharged yet and goes through all the drudgery of a dragoon recruit. I need not say how I felt: he has never been from my thoughts since. I offered him some money—which he refused, but not in a way but what

¹ Robert Allen, "Coleridge's earliest friend," introduced Coleridge to Southey in June, 1794. *Letters*, i. 41 n.

I saw it would be acceptable to him. I therefore gave him a guinea, which was all I had except a few shillings and fortunately I had no more, for as I then felt he would have had it all. Don't say a word about it." (From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.)]

Reading, Wed. March 12, 1794.

My heart thanks you, dear Sir ! for the kindness and delicacy of your attention towards me—the tenderness of those, whom I love and esteem, has increased in an inverse proportion to my well-doing—a reflection, which gives me pleasure, while it humiliates me. My assumed name, and my address are—

Mr. Comberbacke¹
15th K. L. D. White Hart
Reading Berks.—

What steps my Brothers are taking towards my emancipation, I know not—not having heard from my Brother G. for this last week ; but I apprehend that Mr. Rider has been solicited to employ his interest with our Colonel—whether or when this is to take place, I am ignorant. Our Colonel's name is Gwynne—he has, I believe, the rank of General in the army—his residence in town is at the King's Mews—

My situation has, I find, been disclosed within these few days to my Cambridge friends—I have received several Letters written in the tenderest tone of Friendship and Consolation. I am assured that “with undiminished esteem and increased affection they look forward to my arrival among them, as of a lost Brother”. I have been, deeply do I feel that I have been, the dupe of my Imagination, the slave of Impulse, the child of Error and Imbecillity—yet when I

¹The possible source of Coleridge's assumed name is of interest. Soon after his arrival at Cambridge, Coleridge wrote enthusiastically of “Mr. Tomkins, who is confessedly the Finest Writer in Europe. . . . I thought his Collection of Poems one of the best Collections I had ever seen.” (*Illustrated London News*, cii. No. 2815, p. 397.) Possibly this name may have suggested Tomkyn. Of Comberbacke, Coleridge later said to Allsop : “I sometimes compare my own life with that of Steele (yet oh ! how unlike !) led to this from having myself also for a brief time *borne arms*, and written ‘private’ after my name, or rather another name ; for being at a loss when suddenly asked my name, I answered *Cumberback*, and verily my habits were so little equestrian, that my horse, I doubt not, was of that opinion,” *Letters*, . . . of S. T. Coleridge, T. Allsop, 1864, 101,

look back on the numbers and characters of those, who have honoured me with their Regard, I am almost reconciled to myself, and half listen to the whispers of self-adulation.

Adieu, dear Sir ! accept the poor esteem and gratitude of your obliged

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 12

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

[April 12, 1794.]

MY DEAR BROTHER

On Wednesday night I arrived from Reading. I took my place immediately in the Cambridge Fly—went there half past seven, found the horses not put to, so walked on before—saw another coach go up a different road—pursued it under a false supposition—in the meantime the Fly passed by—I missed it—so went to Cambridge on the outside of the Mail, and have arrived safe.¹ I have not yet seen Dr. Pearce—He is gone out to dinner. I wrote to him as soon as I got up this morning. From violent pain in my limbs I am not able to write distinctly what I would wish to say—only that I am with excess of warmest gratitude and affection

Your Brother

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 13

To GEORGE COLERIDGE, *Hackney*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Coleridge's "Tutor's bills," which he mentions in this letter, amounted to £132. 6s. 4½d. His family loyally paid his debt and allowed him to continue at Cambridge. I have before me a series of letters between George Coleridge and the college authorities, showing the sacrifice the Coleridge family underwent. In one letter George Coleridge writes : "Will you allow me likewise to beg that the sum (if an immediate payment of it should distress us) may be paid by installments with a proper security. Such departures from common usage may be as unusual for

¹ According to an unpublished letter from Capt. Geo. Hopkinson, K.L.D. to George Coleridge, Coleridge was notified of his discharge from the Dragoons on April 7, 1794, having been in the army since December 2, 1793.

you to grant, as they are uncomfortable for me to request." "The letters from the college authorities indicate that in spite of his aberrations, Coleridge was held in high esteem. For a fuller account, see "Coleridge the Dragoon," *Modern Philology*, vol. xxviii. No. 4, May, 1931.]

Sunday Evening, May 4, [1794].

MY DEAR BROTHER

I have been very solicitous to write you particularly concerning my affairs, but Mr. Plampin has been absent from College for this last week. This only I can inform you of, that exclusive of my Tutor's bills my other debts are mere trifles, which without the smallest deviation from decency or custom I need not pay for this year, at least. I pray earnestly to God, that he will continue my health and abilities. With his blessing, I doubt not that I shall be able by my exertions to repay my benefactor, gradually yet certainly. Every enjoyment, except of *necessary* comforts I look upon as criminal. To *have* practised a severe economy might perhaps have been a merit in me ; to practise it now, is only not to be a monster.

I pray, my Brother ! that your stay in the country will have repaired those breaches in your health, which anxiety and my guilt must have made. You shall not have arrived long there, before you shall hear from me.

Your grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 14

To SAMUEL BUTLER.

[Original letter, British Museum. Published, *Life and Letters of Dr Samuel Butler* . . . , Samuel Butler, 1896, i. 22.]

[June 8, 1794.]

MY DEAR SIR

I assure you I received pleasure almost to tears from your letter. There are hours in which I am inclined to think very meanly of myself, but when I call to memory the number and character of those who have honoured me with their esteem, I am almost reconciled to my follies and again listen to the whispers of self-adulation.

That I felt pain on my return to Cambridge from the

circumstance of your not having called upon me, it would be vain to deny. Misfortune is a 'Jealous God.' I attribute it, however, to the sickly peevishness of a mind sore with recent calamity.

Tomorrow morning, early, I set out on a pedestrian scheme for Oxford—from whence, after a stay of three or four days, I proceed to Wales—make a tour of the northern part, and return to Cambridge. The whole of my peregrination will take about six weeks.

If you are disengaged, will you take your bread and cheese with me this evening?

Believe me, with great esteem,

Your sincere

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Permit me to thank you for having noticed my literary efforts.

LETTER 15

To ROBERT SOUTHEY

[The original letter is in the possession of Mr. T. J. Wise. Published *Two Lake Poets*, T. J. Wise, 1927, 54.

In June, 1794, Coleridge, while on a visit to Oxford, was introduced to Southey. Together they conceived a scheme for an idyllic community in America, which they called Pantisocracy. For a fuller account of Pantisocracy and of its inevitable failure, see *Life*, 31-44.]

London, Monday Morning,

[*Postmark September 6, 1794.*]

Southey! my dear Fellow! I sit down in melancholy mood—so if you find me gloomy, be not disappointed. I arrived safe after a most unpleasant journey—I lost my Casimir on the road.

The day after my arrival I finished the first act—I transcribed it. The next morning Franklin (of Pembroke, Cam.—a *ci-devant* Grecian of our School—so we call the first boys) called on me and persuaded me to go with him and breakfast with Dyer,¹ Author of the *Complaints of the Poor*,

¹ George Dyer (1755-1841), who left Christ's Hospital soon after Coleridge entered, was living near Cambridge until 1792. He later moved to Clifford's Inn, London. Dyer's *Complaints of the Poor People of England* appeared in 1793.

on Subscription, etc., etc. I went—explained our System—he was enraptured—pronounced it impregnable. He is intimate with Dr. Priestley¹—and doubts not that the Doctor will join us. He shewed me some Poetry, and I shewed him part of the first Act,² which I happened to have about me. He liked it hugely—it was a “nail that would drive”—offered to speak to Robinson his Bookseller. In short, he went—Rob. was in the country—he went to Johnson’s, and to Kearsley’s—The former objected, because Dyer (who is a Reviewer) had confessedly only read the first Act. So on Saturday he called on me, and I gave him the whole to look over, and to-morrow morning I breakfast with him. Hac-tenus de Tragoediâ.

The same morning that I breakfasted with Dyer, after many struggles between the pride vestiarian and the wish to see Grosvenor C. Bedford,³ I carried your letter—He came down. I stayed with him only five minutes—during which time he alluded to America—in these words—“I am sorry, very sorry. I will not say that Southey will leave *all* his friends behind him : a very numerous Body I am sure he will—and one certainly, who will feel a pang he cannot easily express.” The tear started into his Eye—On my going he begged to take my address. Now my vestiture was so very anti-genteel that I was ashamed on my arrival in London to go to my own Coffee-house (the Hungerford)—For this reason and because I had not a Potosi Mountain in my purse, I slept at the Angel Inn, near Christ’s Hospital—and lived with the Grecians, in one of whose Studies I am now writing—Conceive the inward astonishment of G. C. Bedford when with a very grave face I told him : “The Angel Inn, Angel St., Butcher Hall Lane, Newgate St !” Nil admirari is the quintessence of Politeness as well as of wisdom. Grosvenor

¹ Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) although a theologian is better known as a man of science. His advanced views frequently brought him into conflict with the authorities.

² *The Fall of Robespierre*, the joint work of Coleridge and Southey, was printed by Benjamin Flower in September, 1794. Cf. *Poems*, ii. 495-517.

³ Grosvenor C. Bedford was a life-long friend of Southey’s. See *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, C. C. Southey, 1849.

did not stare, and I thought highly of his civility—So, you see, Southey, your new Cambridge Friend has not done you much Honor.

Every night since my arrival I have spent at an Alehouse, by courtesy called a Coffee-house: the "Salutation and Cat" in Newgate St.—We have a comfortable Room to ourselves, and drink Porter and *Punch* round a good fire. My motive for all this is that every night I meet a most intelligent young man who has spent the last five years of his life in America—and is lately come from thence as an Agent to sell Land. He was of our School—I had been kind to him—he remembered it—and comes regularly every evening to "benefit by conversation" he says. He says two thousand pound will do—that he doubts not we can contract for our Passage under £400—that we shall buy this Land a great deal cheaper when we arrive at America, than we could do in England—or why (adds he) am I sent over here? That twelve men can *easily* clear *three hundred* Acres in 4 or 5 months—and that for six hundred Dollars a thousand Acres may be cleared, and houses built upon them. He recommends the *Susquehannah* from its excessive Beauty, and its security from hostile Indians—Every possible assistance will be given us. We may get credit for the Land for ten years or more as we settle upon it—That literary characters make *money* there, that etc., etc. He never saw a Byson in his life, but has heard of them. They are quite backwards. The Mosquitos are not so bad as our Gnats—and after you have been there a little while, they don't trouble you much. He says the Women's *teeth* are bad there—but not the men's—at least not nearly so much—attributes it to neglect—to particular foods—is by no means convinced it is the necessary effect of Climate.

Remember me to your Mother—to our Mother—am I not affiliated? I will write her when I arrive at Cambridge. To Lovell and Mrs. Lovell¹ my *fraternal* love—To Miss

¹ Robert Lovell (1770-1796) had married Mary Fricker, a sister-in-law of Coleridge's future wife. Lovell was an enthusiastic supporter of the Pantisocratic scheme. In 1794 he published *Poems by Bion and Moschus*.

F.¹ *more*. To all remember me. Tell Edith² and Martha³ and Eliza³ that I even now see all their faces and that they are my very dear Sisters.

The younger Le Grice (a sweet-tempered Fellow—he goes with me to Cambridge) and Favell⁴ who goes to Cambr. next October twelve-month—have entreated that they may be allowed to come over after us when they quit College. This morning Favell put this Sonnet into my hand—

Flashes of hope that lighten o'er my Soul !
 Shapings of Fancy, than all Earth possess'd
 More lovely, more ecstatic ! o'er my Breast
 What glittering Waves of vision'd Rapture roll !
 With silent sweet survey of tearful Joy
 I gaze the Vale, where bloom in fadeless Youth
 Love, Beauty, Friendship, Poesy, and Truth.
 My Brethren ! O my Brethren ! then I cry.
 And you, Ye mild-eyed Forms ! a Brother's Kiss
 Give me ! that I may drink of your love-bowl
 And mix in every draught the high-wrought Soul,
 And pluck from every Bank the Rose of Bliss !
 Mock me not, Phantoms ! lest my poor fond Heart
 Outcast for ever into madness start !

Both Le Grice and Favell have all the generous ardent feelings that characterize Genius—they are 19 years old—and beg their fraternal remembrances to you. To Dr. Heath⁵ remember me kindly—To Mr. and Mrs. Harwood, for whom I retain high esteem and respect, as [also] to Mr. Wade.⁶ Do not forget to give my respects to Shad.⁷ Kiss

¹ By Miss F., Coleridge refers, of course, to his future wife, Sara Fricker.

² Edith Fricker became Southey's wife in 1795.

³ Martha and Eliza Fricker never married.

⁴ Samuel Favell, another of the young converts to Pantisocracy, was at this time still at Christ's Hospital.

⁵ Dr. Charles Heath of Monmouth, to whom Coleridge wrote the famous letter about Pantisocracy, included in the *Biog. Lit.*, ii. 344.

⁶ Josiah Wade was a Bristol friend who later gave Coleridge considerable pecuniary assistance.

⁷ Shadrack, the servant of Southey's aunt. See *Letters*, i. 82, for Coleridge's astonishing sense of equality : "SHAD GOES WITH US. HE: MY BROTHER."

little Edward for me—Let me hear from you—I quit London on Wednesday morning.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Taggart is a sensible fellow—remember me to him. You see I conclude my Epistle like the Apostle Paul.

LETTER 16

To the REVEREND F. WRANGHAM, Cobham, Surrey.

[Original letter, Huntington Library. Francis Wrangham (1769-1842), to whom this letter is addressed, was a fellow student of Coleridge's at Cambridge. He later became archdeacon of Cleveland and prebendary of York and Chester. He is remembered for his translations and for his theological works. To Wrangham's *Poems* (1795) Coleridge contributed a "Translation of Wrangham's *Hendecasyllabi ad Bruntonam e Granta Exituram*" and a poem, *To Miss Brunton*. See *Poems*, 66-67.]

Thursday, Oct. 9th, 1794.

The Scriptures tell me, dear Wrangham! that Ingratitude is worse than the Sin of Witchcraft: that I may not therefore be condemned of the former, I must plead guilty to the latter—with this distinction that instead of being the Wizard, I am the Bewitched. I have indeed incautiously drank too deeply from the bowl of the blameless Circe—the sweet intoxication, that makes the Heart forget it's duties and it's cares. I give you however but little credit for your conjecture—as, if I mistake not, you drew the Truth from the Well of your own Experience. The Bruntons¹ left us yesterday Morning—since which time Caldwell and I have chaunted a love-lorn Duet, most pathetically—

Now would my Heart impell me to pour forth a declaration of praises on her Character—but I will not do it for two reasons—Firstly, because it would have too much *Truth* to possess any *Novelty* to *you*—and secondly because if I once fairly get into the subject—

An Host of Elephants were Atomies

To tug me from the Strain—as Mr. Greathead says—

but if you ask who was the rather a favourite—Caldwell of

¹ The Brunton sisters of Norwich. See *Letters*, i. 86 note.

course. Had she not deemed more highly of him than of me, I should have deemed less highly of her. There is a Hue of Elegance suffused over his Virtues and Abilities that gives them a decided preference to the same Qualities in other men.

Whether he has performed your commission, he will himself inform you— I have not asked him—as on the receipt of your letter to *me*, he said he would write himself.

Your plan of the Quadragesimal Imitations I like quoad se rather than quoad te—I think you superior to it. There are other objections. The merit of those little Poems consists almost entirely in the neatness of the Latinity—in English Poetry we want a greater *body of mind*, than they possess. Nor are they in general originals—the Thoughts are found elsewhere. To give Imitations of Imitations and *retranslate*—would it answer? Your Cinna is an illustration excepted. I like it much—the penultimate Line is however weak—*facundia* ought not to have been lost—A Perry *might* have written Lies—*eloquent* Lies. Not in the easy verse, which you have with great Judgment adopted, a trochee in the fourth foot may be tolerated—in general, it has an unpleasant effect on the ear—it is slovenly—I allude to the “*vulgār tō beguile.*”

Your Love Ode is beautiful—it is almost too good for Flower¹; were it not so beautiful, I should not remark so small a fault as the falling off the sense in the “in his Side.” The word “Swain” in the antecedent Line is (perhaps I have an irrational antipathy to it) but to my idea it conveys too much of the cant of Pastoral—Would it not be better thus—

Fly, fatal Shaft ! (with cruel zeal
The conscious Murd'ers cried)
Go teach this Stoic Heart to feel
The Vengeance due to Pride—
 or anguish

It cannot be inserted *this* week—and before next Wednesday I shall hear from you—(rather impudent or so !) but my

¹ Coleridge refers to Benjamin Flower, the publisher.

epistolary expectations are in inverse proportion to my deserts.

If you mean to continue your Imitations—you must procure the second Volume of the *Quadragesimalia*—you may procure it from Oxford—Christ Church meditates a third Volume—but not for some years—if you have any friend at Christ Church he can easily get the Manuscript from the Tutor—and transcribe one most elegant thing of Canning's—the subject is—The Cursing of Crassus on his departure from the City on the Parthian Expedition—It is really a fine little Poem—

Shortly after New Year's Day I shall pay a visit to Norwich—*Middleton* resides there—and Mr. and Mrs. Brunton have given me an invitation too pressing to be refused—I hope however to see *Cobham* at Christmas and to go from there to Norwich—

God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 17

To the REVEREND F. WRANGHAM, *Cobham, Surrey.*

[Original letter, Harvard College Library. A few lines published, *The Road to Xanadu*, J. L. Lowes, 1927, 573.]

October 24, 1794.

DEAR WRANGHAM

I am so unwell, that I should have deferred the gratification, I feel in writing to you—but that I could not send Musgrove to you empty handed—

I wished to write you particularly concerning your Imitation Scheme—my first advice is, that you should drop it altogether and apply your abilities to original compositions—perhaps, to genteel Comedy—as a department of literature most lucrative—and may I not add, peculiarly adapted to your cast of Genius? If however you adhere to your former Plan—would it not be a more entertaining Work—to select the eminently beautiful Poematia [Poemata?] from Brunck's *Analects*¹—print them with notes—and add or connex [sic] Imitations? I could engage to mark out 30 to you most

¹ Cf. Brunck's *Analecta Veterum Poetarum Graecorum*, 1772.

exquisite in their kind, yet little noticed. My assistance such as it is would of course be at your service, in whatever manner you found it convenient to employ it.

I have sent you the Tragedy of Robespierre—"libellus, qui mitis subito calore et quâdam festinandi voluptate fluxit. *Biduo* effusus est—quamvis metuo, ne verum istuc versus quoque ipsi de se probent."

My head throbs so violently and my Spirits are so low, that I shall just add a Sonnet and conclude—It was occasioned by a letter, which I lately received from a young Lady, whom for five years I loved—almost to madness, dissuasive from my American Scheme¹—but where Justice leads, I will follow—though the Path be through thorns and roughness—The Scotts desire their Compliments. *Compliments!* Cold aristocratic Inanities! I abjure their Nothingness. If there be any whom I deem worthy of remembrance—I am their Brother. I call even my Cat Sister in the Fraternity of universal Nature. Owls I respect and Jack Asses I love :² for Aldermen and Hogs, Bishops and Royston Crows I have not particular partiality—they are my Cousins however, at least by Courtesy. But Kings, Wolves, Tygers, Generals, Ministers, and Hyaenas, I renounce them all—or if they *must* be my kinsmen, it shall be in the 50th Remove—May the Almighty Pantisocratizer of Souls pantisocratize the Earth, and bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE !

Sonnet.

Thou bleedest, my poor Heart ! and thy distress
Doth Reason ponder with an anguish'd Smile
Probing thy sore wound sternly, Tho' the while .
Her eye be swoln and dim with Heaviness.
Why didst thou *listen* to Hope's whisper bland ?
Or, list'ning, why *forget* it's healing tale
When Jealousy with feverish fancies pale
Jarr'd thy fine fibres with a Maniac's hand ?
Faint was that Hope and rayless !—Yet 'twas fair

¹ This letter from Mary Evans is quoted by Coleridge in a letter to Southey of October 21, 1794. See *Letters*, i. 87-88.

² Coleridge's poem, *To a Young Ass*, was composed on the same day as this letter to Wrangham.

And sooth'd with many a dream the hour of rest :
 Thou should'st have lov'd it most when most oppress
 And nurs'd it with an Agony of Care,
 Ev'n as a Mother her sweet infant heir
 That pale and sickly droops upon her Breast !—¹

LETTER 18

To GEORGE DYER, No. 45 Carey Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields,
 London.

[Original letter, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Published in *American Publishers' Circular and Literary Gazette*, June 15, 1863. This important letter explains fully the circumstances lying back of Coleridge's marriage and shows that the responsibility was not wholly Southey's, as Coleridge afterwards intimated. That Coleridge married out of a sense of duty, rather than of love, is quite evident. Coleridge and Sara Fricker were married on October 4, 1795.]

[1795.]

No. 25 College Street, Bristol.

MY DEAR SIR

Intending to return from day to day I postponed writing to you—I will however delay it no longer. I am anxious and perturbed beyond measure concerning my proposed expedition to Scotland—I will pour out my heart before you as water. In the Autumn of last year, you know, we formed our American Plan and with precipitance that did credit to our hearts rather than heads, fixed on the coming April as the time of our embarkation. This following circumstances have rendered impracticable—but there are other engagements not so dissoluble. In expectation of emigrating on the Pantisocratic Plan I payed my addresses to a young Lady, whom “ οὗτ' αἰνεῖν ἐστὶ κακοῖσι θέμις ! ” Independently of the Love and Esteem which her Person, and polished understanding may be supposed to have inspired into a young Man, I consider myself as under particular Ties of Gratitude to her—since in confidence of my Affection she has rejected the Addresses of two Men, one of them of large Fortune—and by her perseverant Attachment to me disoblged her Relations in a very uncomfortable

¹ For another version of this sonnet, see *Poems*, i. 72. It was entitled *On a Discovery Made too Late*. The ‘occasion’ for this sonnet was Coleridge's discovery (after he had become engaged to Sara Fricker in his mad idealism) that he was still deeply in love with Mary Evans.

Degree. Perpetually obliged to resist the entreaties and to endure the reproachful admonitions of her Uncle etc., she vainly endeavors to conceal from me how heavy her heart is with anxiety, how disquieted by Suspense— To leave her for two or three years would, I fear, be sacrificing her health and happiness— In short, why should I write circuitously to you ? So commanding are the requests of her Relations, that a short Time must decide whether she marries me whom she loves with an affection to the ardor of which my Deserts bear no proportion—or a man whom she strongly dislikes, in spite of his fortune and solicitous attentions to her. These peculiar circumstances she had with her usual Delicacy concealed from me till my arrival at Bristol. What am I to do with regard to the Earl of Buchan ? ¹ Am I to live in the house with the Erskines ? Is this a necessary accompaniment of Tutorage ? Or could I take Lodgings in Edinburgh or wherever else the young Gentlemen are situated ? If, as I suppose, these questions must be answered in the Negative, do you not think it my Duty to decline the offer ? Southey is exerting his Influence to procure a situation in London—I am now about to write to Scott at the Telegraph Office to know if I can get a Reporter's Place, and on this wait till I can call forth the Exertions of my Friends. My Subscription Work I shall be able to bring out by the Close of the Year ²—I shall clear more than an 100 pound by it—Besides, Southey and I have one or two schemes of literary cooperation which we will impart to you in London—

My dear Sir ! believe me, my heart beats high with gratitude to you— I know you will write to me as to a Brother !

Since I have been in Bristol I have endeavored to disseminate Truth by three political Lectures ³—I believe, I

¹ Coleridge had apparently made a potential plan to go to Scotland as tutor to the sons of the Earl of Buchan (David Steuart Erskine, 1742-1829).

² The proposed volume of *Imitations from the Modern Latin Poets*, which was never published.

³ The first political lecture was *A Moral and Political Lecture* ; it was reprinted as the first of two *Conciones ad Populum* ; or, *Addresses to the People*. The third lecture was *The Plot Discovered* ; or *An Address to the People against Ministerial Treason*. All were reprinted in *Essays on his own Times* (1850),

shall give a fourth— But the opposition of the Aristocrats is so furious and determined, that I begin to fear, that the Good I do is not proportionate to the Evil I occasion— Mobs and Mayors, Blockheads and Brickbats, Placards and Press gangs have leagued in horrible Conspiracy against me— The Democrats are as sturdy in the support of me—but their number is comparatively small. Two or three uncouth and untrained Automata have threatened my Life—and in the last Lecture the Genus infimum were scarcely restrained from attacking the house in which the “damn’d Jacobin was jawing away.”

The first Lecture I was *obliged* to publish, it having been confidently asserted that there was Treason in it. Written at one sitting between the hours of twelve at night and the Breakfast Time of the day, on which it was delivered, believe me that no literary Vanity prompted me to the printing of it— The reasons which compelled me to publish it forbad me to correct it— Scott will beg your acceptance of as many Copies as you may choose to give away—

I am glad to see your Book advertised—I have left orders for Ten—Cottle, the Bookseller here has sent for them.

Southey speaks of you with high esteem and nascent *friendship*. You will esteem and love him. His Genius and acquirements are uncommonly great yet they bear no proportion to his Moral Excellence—He is truly a Man of *perpendicular Virtue a downright upright Republican!* He is *Christianizing* apace— I doubt not, that I shall present him to you right orthodox in the heterodoxy of Unitarianism. To Mr. Friend¹ present my most grateful respects— God almighty bless him!—

To Gilbert Wakefield² mention my name as of one who remembers him respectfully—

A Pompous Dissenter here—says that though he disap-

¹ Coleridge probably refers to William Frend (1757-1841) the reformer, who was expelled from Cambridge in 1793. His trial created a great furor.

² Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801), a scholar and writer, was imprisoned in 1799 for his seditious pamphlet. He was much admired by the young reformers

proves of the *Socinian* Rebellion against the divinity of Christ, he must allow that Dr. Disney¹ is an uncommon Character in these days when the advocate for Liberty and Deist are almost synonymous—"He is at once, Sir, Theophilus and Phileleutheros!"

God bless you and your grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 19

To GEORGE DYER, No. 45 *Carey Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London.*

[Original letter, Drexel Institute.

This letter is undated; but the fact that Coleridge mentions his intention of sending in the sonnet on Lord Stanhope (published *Morning Chronicle*, Jan. 31, 1795) and his lectures (published 1795) makes it certain that this letter was written in January, 1795.]

[January, 1795.]

MY DEAR SIR

I received your second Letter last night—your first—which required an immediate answer—should not have remained unanswered so long voluntarily—but I have been very ill with a rheumatic fever—thank God, I am recovered.

In a late Letter you tell me not to be too sanguine in my expectations of the profits of the Latin Poets—I rated those profits at one hundred pounds—and I have now 450 Subscribers—300 Copies pay all the Expences. However, I assure you, I speculate not on that work.²

There is one sentence in your last letter which affected me greatly—"I feel a degree of languor and etc., and by seeing and frequently feeling much illiberality acquire something of misanthropy!"—It is melancholy to think, that the best of us are liable to be shaped and coloured by surrounding objects—and a demonstrative proof, that Man was not made to live in great cities! Almost all the physical Evil in the World depends on the existence of moral Evil—and the long-continued contemplation of the latter does not tend to melio-

¹ Dr. John Disney (1746-1816) was a Unitarian clergyman.

² It is fortunate that Coleridge did not speculate on this work, for it never appeared.

rate the human heart. The pleasures, which we receive from rural beauties, are of little Consequence compared with the Moral Effect of these pleasures—beholding constantly the Best possible we at last become ourselves the best possible. In the country, all around us smile Good and Beauty—and the Images of this divine *καλοκάγαθόν* are miniaturized on the mind of the beholder, as a Landscape on a Convex Mirror. Thompson in that most lovely Poem, the Castle of Indolence, says

[“] I care not, Fortune ! what you me deny—
 You cannot rob me of free Nature’s Grace !
 You cannot shut the Windows of the Sky
 Through which the Morning shews her dewy face—
 You cannot bar my constant feet to rove
 Through Wood and Vale by living Stream at Eve ”¹—

Alas ! Alas ! she *can* deny us all this—and can force us fettered and handcuffed by our Dependencies and Wants to *wish* and *wish* away the bitter Little of Life, in the felon-crowded Dungeon of a great City !

God love you, my very dear Sir ! I would that we could form a Pantisocracy in England and that you could be one of us ! The finely-fibred Heart, that like the statue of Memnon, trembles into melody or the sun beam touch of Benevolence, is most easily jarred into the dissonance of Misanthropy. But you will never suffer your feelings to be benumbed by the torpedo Touch of that Fiend—I know you—and know that you will drink of every Mourner’s sorrows, even while your own Cup is trembling over it’s Brink !

We certainly shall not come to London without a certainty of Employment—but what I most ardently wish, is to be employed in some department of Literature which does not require my Residence in Town. Is it possible that I could gain an employment in this new Work, the Citizen ? “ When the Fame is nothing, and the Profits sure ”—with one sentence you have encompassed the whole extent of my wishes. My Hopes, when most highly-plumed by my Fancy, soar

¹ Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, ii. III. Coleridge quotes the lines incorrectly.

not more sublimely, than to labor and live—to be useful and to be happy. Not to be poor—would make me very rich. If by any means I could procure a salary of a guinea a week, I would be well content to work like a Russian—In short, we wish and mean to live (in all the severity of Economy) in Wales—near some Town, where there is a speedy Communication with London—Can any thing be procured, which may employ us there ?

I did not expect that you would have thought so well of my political Lecture—the second and third are far superior to it in point of composition—but I had no *necessity* for publishing them—and therefore no Temptation—I was soon obliged by the persecutions of Darkness to discontinue them—Southey is now about to give a course of Historical Lectures—unconnected with—at least not *immediately* relative to—the politics of the Day. Southey desires his remembrances to you in warmth of esteem.

A Friend of our's is soon coming to London—who will convey to you a little Pacquet from me— I shall soon transmit to the Morning Chronicle 5 more Sonnets to Eminent characters—among the rest, one to Lord Stanhope!¹—

I receive great pleasure from your Letters—write soon.

To Dr. Gregory present my respects ; to Gilbert Wakefield. Is Mr. Friend in Town ?

God love you and your obliged and grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Poor *Brothers* !² They'll make him know the *Law* as well as the *Prophets* !

¹ The *Sonnets on Eminent Characters* were contributed to the *Morning Chronicle* in December, 1794, and January, 1795. See *Poems*, 79-90.

² Richard Brothers (1757-1824), a religious enthusiast, was arrested on a charge of treason and confined as a criminal lunatic in 1795. He was released in 1806.

LETTER 20

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Harvard College Library. A few lines published, *Early Recollections*, i. 285.]

January, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR

There must be *four* sheets I find—all of which are all finished—yea—polish'd—in addition to these *now sent*. There are two more Epistles and the nativity and the Notes,—but I have left at Stowey the six sheets already printed—I do not want them—only let George Burnett¹ look over them and write down—to what Poems and to what parts of what Poems there are references to Notes—he can do it in ten Minutes, and you shall have them and the remaining Poems on Saturday morning by nine o'clock—it is impossible, that they can finish what I have now sent before that time. There is a beautiful little poetic Epistle of Sara's,² which I mean to print here—what if the first part of her letter to you—viz—down to—"And you, dear Sir! the arch-magician!"—were likewise printed—so as to have two of her Poems—It is remarkably elegant and would do honor to *any* Volume of *any* Poems. As I mean to have none but large Poems in the second Volume—none under three hundred lines, therefore I have crowded all my little pieces into this.

My Sara, I believe, is indebted to her Mother a guinea and an half—if it prove convenient to you, will you inclose it to her, and put it to my account?

The Nativity³ is not quite three hundred Lines—it has cost me much labor in polishing, more than any poem I ever wrote—and I believe, deserves it more—Before it be sent to

¹ George Burnett (1776-1811) was another of the Pantisocrats. He eventually took to opium and ruined his life.

² *The Silver Thumble*, *Poems*, 104-106. Mrs. Coleridge told her daughter that she wrote but little of this poem: *Biog. Lit.* (1847), ii. 411.

³ *The Nativity* is apparently one of the "Poems which Mr. Coleridge intended to write," which are listed by Cottle. See *Reminiscences* . . . 1847, 469. I have been unable to identify this poem.

the press, if you would desire Mr. Estlin¹ to peruse it, and to correct anything he particularly dislikes, I should thank you—and let it be printed as he returns it—for I have an implicit confidence in the soundness of his Taste in compositions of the higher cast. The Epistle to Tom Poole² which will come with the Nativity, is, I think, one of my most *pleasing* compositions. God bless you

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I smoked yesterday afternoon—and then imprudently went into the Sea—the consequence was that on my return I was taken sick—and my triumphant Tripes cataracted most Niagara-ishly.

N.B. On Wednesday Morning by nine o'clock the Preface shall be sent—they cannot want it before—or if they do—they shall have it on Monday by some conveyance or other.

LETTER 21

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Harvard College Library.]

[1796.]

MY DEAR FRIEND

I meant to have been with you on Saturday—but Mrs. Coleridge's Spirits would not permit me, George Burnett being absent. I shall come in tomorrow to dine with W. Coates—The poem addressed to you³ print with your name or with the title already prefixed, as you like—but thus let it be concluded

¹ John Prior Estlin (1747-1817) was the Unitarian minister at Bristol. He was a warm supporter of Coleridge during the years 1796-1814, and to him Coleridge wrote the fine series of letters privately printed for the Philobiblon Society, the *Unpublished Letters from Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*. (Communicated by H. A. Bright.) Estlin spoke highly of Coleridge to his friends, extended to him his personal friendship, and aided him in a pecuniary way.

² Thomas Poole (1765-1837) was a tanner at Nether Stowey. He assisted Coleridge in many ways and remained a life-long friend. For the Epistle or Dedication to Thomas Poole see *Poems* (Ed. by J. Dykes Campbell), 1893, 586-587. This appeared with the *Ode* in a small quarto pamphlet in 1796.

³ *Poems*, 102-104.

So Nature mourn'd, when sunk the First Day's Light,
With Stars unseen before spangling her robe of night.

Still soar, my FRIEND ! Those richer views among,
Strong, rapid, fervent, flashing Fancy's beam !
Virtue and Faith shall love your gentler song ;
But Poesy demands th' impassion'd theme.
Wak'd by Heaven's silent dews at Eve's mild gleam
What balmy sweets POMONA breathes around !
But if the vext air rush, a stormy stream,
Or Autumn's shrill Gust moan in plaintive sound,
With Fruits and Flowers she loads the tempest-honor'd
ground.

The poem to begin thus—Unboastful Bard ! whose verse etc.

Epistle V.

The production of a young Lady addressed to the author of the Poems alluded to in the preceding Epistle. She had lost her thimble—and her complaints being accidentally overheard by him, her friend, he immediately sent her four silver thimbles, to take her choice of.

The two last lines to be thus printed—

Yes, Bard polite ! you but obeyed the Laws
Of Justice, when the Thimble you had sent :
What wounds, your thought-bewild'ring Muse might cause,
Tis well, your finger-shielding Gifts prevent ! ¹
Sara—

God bless you, my dear Sir,
and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 22

To JOSIAH WADE, No. 5 Wine Street, Bristol.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Partly published, with considerable omissions, *Early Recollections*, i. 164-5. The 'P.S.' added by Cottle is not to be found in the original letter.

This letter was written while Coleridge was canvassing for subscribers to the *Watchman*, his short-lived attempt at a periodical. Coleridge

¹ *Poems*, 104-106.

wrote a good many letters to Wade while on this tour, and E. H. Coleridge says : " It is probable that Wade supplied funds for the journey, and that Coleridge felt himself bound to give an account of his progress and success." *Letters*, i. 152 note.]

[January 10, 1796.]
Sunday morning.

MY DEAR WADE

We were five in number, and twenty five in quantity. The moment I entered the coach, I stumbled on a huge projection, which might be called a belly with the same propriety that you might name Mount Atlas a Molehill. Heavens ! that a man should be inconscionable enough to enter a stage-coach, who would want elbow-room if he were walking on Salisbury Plain !!! This said Citizen Squelch-gut was a most violent Aristocrat, but a pleasant humorous Fellow in other respects, and remarkably well informed in agricultural science ; so that the time passed pleasantly enough— We arrived at Worcester half past two ! I, of course, dined at the inn, where I met Mr. Stevens. After dinner I christianized myself, that is, washed and changed, and marched in finery and cleanliness to High Street. Mr. Barr received me most kindly. His Wife is indeed a charming Matron. A more matronly and more pleasing woman I do not recollect to have seen. We had much and very various conversation in which Mr. Barr appeared to me a deep thinking Man. With regard to *business*, there is no chance of doing any thing in Worcester. The Aristocrats are so numerous and the influence of the Clergy so extensive, that Mr. Barr thinks that no bookseller will venture to publish *the* work. I dine with him to-day—and this evening I shall see Mr. Sandford—To my lasting regret Mr. Osborn is out of town. I am anxious about this printing dilemma, and should be *very* anxious, were not you and Charles Danvers my proxies, proxies more valuable than their principal. An excellent Man is Charles Danvers,¹ sincere and earnest in the investigation of Truth, exemplary in domestic duty, and an active philanthropist. With great generosity of character he unites a proper circumspectness ; and without

¹ Charles Danvers, a life-long friend of Robert Southey.

coldness he is always calm. When I regarded Southey's as a *colossal* virtue, even then I thought Charles Danvers the spirit of Southey made perfect. He had his sanctity without his severity—his fortitude without his frown. Tomorrow I shall go through the Manufactory with Mr. Barr, and on Tuesday morning set off for Birmingham. Worcester is a beautiful Town—but of all the neat houses give me the Houses of Kempsey, I never saw so neat a Village— At Birmingham I shall of course write you again. I did not sleep at Mr. Barr's—Mr. Flight the partner having arrived from London that very evening.

Dear Wade ! there are topics, on which the voice falters and hesitates, but the pen flows with particular rapidity ; but I will not even *write* of my obligations to you. You know I *feel* them ! and they are not painful to me, because, independent of gratitude, I should have loved and esteemed you. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Wade and believe me to be what you believe me.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 23

To the REV. T. EDWARDS.

[Original letter, Trinity College, Cambridge.]

Friday morning, [January, 1796.]

MY DEAR SIR

Among my numerous obligations to Mr. Estlin I hold his introductory letter to you not one of the least—but “let that pass, Hal”,—I am an awkward hand at thanking people.

Dr. Darwin¹ is an extraordinary man and received me very courteously. He had heard that I was a Unitarian, and bantered incessantly on the subject of Religion—on which subject that he had never read a single page. He is an Atheist—but has no new arguments, and does not seem acquainted with many *ingenious* old ones. When he talks on any other subject, he is a wonderfully entertaining and

¹ Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802).

instructive old man. Dr. Crompton¹ unluckily was not in Derby—I left your Letter and a prospectus—Business succeeded tolerably thus. From Derby I proceeded to Nottingham, where I now am. Mr. Strutt² of Derby, the successor of Sir Richard Arkwright,³ gave me a letter to Mr. Fellowes⁴—and I am likely to do a good deal of Business here. On Sunday I preach a Charity Sermon—if they could have procured any one to have gone to Birmingham to supply your place, they meant to have dispatched a prefatory letter to you—for, I find, your name is *up* as we used to say at Cambridge. So in lieu of a letter they have fixed on me—in one sense, I am not sorry for the application—as the *Sacred* may eventually help off the *profane*—and my *Sermons* spread a sort of sanctity over my *Sedition*.

Did the advertisement appear in the Birmingham Paper? Has Belsher received my accession to the number of Subscribers? Be so kind as to desire him at the conclusion of a fortnight to write me word how many I may send—directing to me—S. T. Coleridge, Mr. Wade's, No. 5, Wine Street, Bristol. The work will not be published until Tuesday, the first of March.

I never received my breeches and shoes—did Mr. Harwood send them? Where directed? If he have not sent them, desire him to send them on Monday morning by the Sheffield Coach, directed to me at the “Tortoise, Sheffield”—the parcel had better be delivered on the Sunday evening.

I have got among all the first families in Nottingham, and am marvellously caressed, but to tell you the truth I am quite home-sick—owing to this long long absence from Bristol. I was at the *Ball*, last night—and saw the most numerous collection of handsome men and women, that I ever did in one place; but alas! the faces of strangers are

¹ Dr. Crompton of Derby was a relative of the Cromptons of Liverpool, with whom Coleridge later became so friendly.

² Jedediah Strutt (1726-1797) was a cotton-spinner and an inventor.

³ Sir Richard Arkwright (1732-1792), the inventor.

⁴ This must be John Fellowes of Nottingham. Recently (April 28, 1931) two letters to Fellowes, dated May 13, 1796 and May 31, 1796, were sold at Sotheby's.

but moving Portraits—and far from my comfortable little cottage I feel as if I were in the long damp gallery of some Nobleman's House, amused with the beauty and variety of the Paintings, but shivering from cold, and melancholy from loneliness.

Mr. Fellowes (to whom I was introduced by a letter from Mr. Strutt) gave one of my Prospectuses to an Aristocrat—He glanced his eye on the motto "That all might know the Truth, and that the Truth may make us free"—a *sedition* beginning! quoth he—Sir! said Mr. Fellowes the motto is quoted from another Author—Poo! quoth the Aristocrat—what odds is it whether he wrote it himself or quoted it from any other *sedition Dog*? Please (replied Mr. F.) to look into the 32nd Chapter of John, and you will find, Sir! that the *sedition Dog* was—Jesus Christ! This is literally and accurately fact. The Gentleman's name was Needham. Fellowes came grinning to me; you never saw a man grin more luxuriously. This is one proof among thousands that Aristocrats do not read the Bible. I leave Nottingham on Monday morning. I shall expect to be favored with a line from you addressed to me "to be left at the Post-Office, Sheffield."

Present my respects to the Reverend Mr. Coates,
believe me

Yours sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 24

To the REV. T. EDWARDS.

[Original letter, Trinity College, Cambridge.]

[Feb. 4, 1796.]

Your spells, my dear Sir! might have been *Prosper-like*; but they are not like to prosper—so that both orthographically and heterographically, like Ashur, I must abide in these *Breaches*. As Harwood's form possesses such lubric and gregarious qualities, I presume you must, *thumb him* before you can safely exclaim "You're him!" Great

Goddess of Grinnosity ! what infernal nonsense will not your true ¹ *Carthagian* squitter, rather than not *let a pun* !

I preached on Sunday to very good purpose, as far as the plate went. Indeed (altogether) my sermon was the best composition I have ever been guilty of. I can give you but faint ideas of the kindness and hospitality, with which I was treated at Nottingham. I arrived at Sheffield Monday night—on Tuesday morning called on Mr. Kirkby with the letter from Bristol, the only letter I had from Bristol for Sheffield. Mr. Kirkby is journeying. I then called on Mr. Naylor. He too was absent. But finding that he was on a visit to a friend's house only four miles off, I trudged thither over hill and dale, thro' a worse road than ever Flibbertigibbet led poor Tom. This friend proved to be Mr. Meanly—that tobacco-toothed Parson with a majestic periphery of guts, whom we met (together with Scofield) at Mr. Coates'. Mr. Naylor received me politely—Mrs. Naylor with kindness (N.B. she is an engaging little girl). Naylor declined interesting himself in my "Watchman", or even procuring me a Publisher—his motives were such as I could not but enter into and approve. He had formerly been joint-proprietor (with poor Montgomery) ² of the *Iris* : and now that poor Montgomery is in prison, of course could not without great indelicacy promote a work which might injure the Sale of his Paper. However he recommended me to call on Mr. Smith, a bookseller, and gave me a letter to a Mr. Shore, a man of fortune who lives at Mearsbrook, two miles from Sheffield. I left him—it was now dark : and into pits and out of pits, and against stones and over stones I contrived to stumble some mile and a half out of my way. I enquired my road at a cottage—and on lifting up the latch beheld a tall old Hag, whose soul-gelding ugliness would chill to eternal chastity a cantharidized Satyr. However an Angel of Light could not have been more civil, and she sent her Son to conduct me home. Yesterday morning I called on

¹ "Homo Punicus." S.T.C.

² James Montgomery (1771-1854), the poet, was imprisoned in 1795 and 1796 for libel in the *Sheffield Iris*, of which he was the editor.

Mr. Shore—who behaved civilly to me and promised to recommend my work as far as he was able, and offered me three guineas towards it's expenses, which (of course) I declined (N.B. The Governess of the Charity at Nottingham offered me three guineas for my charity, which I positively declined ; but this morning I have received by Nottingham coach a parcel (without letter or name) containing eight pairs of silk stockings, ribbed, striped, and plain—and a sealed parcel for Mrs. Coleridge, containing I know not what—it being sealed). On my return from Mr. Shore's I called on Smith, the Bookseller— I opened my business, left my prospectus, and called on him a second time to receive the answer an hour after. “ Sir ! (said he) I have frequently heard of you ; and the very motives, why I ought to publish and promote your work, are the motives that make me hesitate to do it— I am afraid that from the superiority of it's plan and your known abilities it will interfere with, and perhaps greatly lessen, the sale of poor Montgomery's paper—which I edit during his confinement—without pay or profit, I assure you but he is my particular friend.” I answered him—“ I hope you do me the justice to believe, that I entirely enter into your feelings and approve of them ; and if it cannot be published without injuring Montgomery, I will apply to [no] other Bookseller, but give it up altogether.” He thanked me for my etc., in the name of Montgomery and said he would advise with a few *friends*. This morning he returned me a final answer—that to advertise and publicly disperse the work here would certainly injure Montgomery ; but that he thought that 20 or 30 might be disposed of among friends—and so the matter rests.

Tomorrow morning I set off for Manchester at six o'clock—it is only 48 miles distant—and the Coach will not arrive till 10 o'clock at night. By heavens ! a tortoise would outgallop us ! My dear Edwards ! do conjure up some dozen Ariels, and bid them hover around me whispering pleasant day-dreams ! God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I have opened my letter again to tell you I have just received my Breeches etc. from Harwood. Pray let me hear

from you—directed to be left at the Post-Office, Liverpool. I will write again from Manchester.

P.S. You promised to order a Joan of Arc for each of the Libraries—Do not order this from a London Bookseller, because with my first parcel I can send them from Bristol, which will be a great saving to Cottle.

LETTER 25

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Harvard College Library. Published incorrectly, *Early Recollections*, i. 159-161. With this letter Cottle took the most unjustifiable liberty. By omitting the sentence, "I will not give away *one* at your expense except for your interest"; and by changing "I will send you a sheet full of Sonnets," to "I will give away a sheet full of sonnets," Cottle puts Coleridge in the light of an author making untoward demands of his publisher.]

March 4, 1796.

MY EVER DEAR COTTLE

I will wait on you this Evening by nine o'clock, till which hour I am *on Watch*. Your Wednesday's Invitation, of course I accept; but I am rather sorry, that you should add *this* expence to former liberalities. Two Editions would but barely repay you—Is it not possible to get 25 or 30 of the Poems ready by tomorrow—as Parsons of Paternoster Row has written to me pressingly about them—"People are perpetually asking after them—*all* admire the Poetry in the Watchman." I shall send them with 100 of the first number—which he has written for. I think if you were to send half a dozen Joans of Arc on sale or return, it would not be amiss—To all the places in the North we will send my Poems, my Conciones etc. and the Joans of Arc together per waggon—you shall pay the carriage for the London, and the Birmingham parcel—I for the Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham, Manchester and Liverpool. With regard to the Poems, I mean to give away, I wish to make it a common interest—that is, I will not give away *one* at your expence except for your interest—I will send you a sheet full of Sonnets¹—I

¹ "This 'sheet' of Sonnets never arrived." *Early Recollections*, i. 161.

to Mrs. Barbauld, one to Wakefield, one to Dr. Beddoes, one to Wrangham (a reviewer in the *British Critic*, and a college acquaintance of mine, an admirer of me and a *pitier* of my principles) and one to George Augustus Potter Esq.¹ Mrs. Barbauld's Brother, Dr. Aikin, was the person who reviewed Joan of Arc in the *Analytical Review*—and you *owe* that Review to Estlin's praises of the Poem at Mrs. Barbauld's. Beside these, I should only wish two copies—one for myself and one for my Brother. The Sonnets I mean to write on the blank Leaf.

Concerning the Paper for the Watchman—I was vexed to hear your proposals of trusting it to Biggs, or Reid who if they undertook it at all, would have a profit which—heaven knows—I cannot afford—My plan was—either that you should write to your paper-maker, saying—that you had recommended him to *me* and ordering for *me* 20 or 40 Reams at a half-year's credit—or else in your own name—in which case—I would transfer to you Reid's weekly account amounting to 120 three-pence half pennys (i.e. 35 Shillings) and the Birmingham *Monthly* account amounting to 560 three pences (i.e.) 7*£*.—14*£* a Month.

For the books I thank you—

God bless you

and S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 26

To the REV. T. EDWARDS.

[Original letter, Trinity College, Cambridge. Published in the *Academy*, No. 1138 (Feb. 24, 1894), 170. W. A. Wright (who contributed this letter to the *Academy*) says the date must be 1795, but the reference to Mrs. Coleridge, whom Coleridge did not marry until October 1795, proves that his conjecture is wrong. The *Watchman*, moreover, appeared in 1796.]

Saturday, March 12, 1796.

DEAR EDWARDS

Since I last wrote you, I have been tottering on the edge of madness—my mind overbalanced on the contra side

¹ To this list of names Cottle adds C. Lamb, Wordsworth, and Dr. Parr.

of Happiness—the repeated blunders of the printer, the forgetfulness and blunders of my associate etc., etc., abroad, and at home Mrs. Coleridge dangerously ill, and expected hourly to miscarry. Such has been my situation for this last fortnight—I have been obliged to take Laudanum almost every night. Blessed be God ! the prospect begins to clear up—Mrs. Coleridge is considerably better, tho' she still keeps her bed—and my printing promises to go on with clockwork regularity—and you will have Thursday's " Watchman " on Thursday—if you will be so kind as to inform Mr. Clark that to a certainty it will arrive on Thursday morning by the Bristol Mail—and always for the future *you* will have the number the same hour on which it is *published* in Bristol. With regard to the carriage, concerning which Mr. Clark has written to me, would it be too heavy a tax on his profits, if for every forty numbers he sold, he paid sixpence towards the carriage—thus—the carriage to Birmingham of all the parcels included in one wrapper will be 3—6. Now supposing Mr. Clark sells 120 in Birmingham—he should charge *me* two shillings for carriage, if 160, eighteenpence—if 220, one shilling and so on. Now supposing he should sell 160 numbers, this would *leave* him a profit, of eleven shillings and four pence every eight days. If I had said sixpence in every thirty instead of 40, surely I had not been unreasonable.

I received last week a song, of some tolerable merit entitled " Supposition " and dated, the Museum, Birmingham—and subscribed by J. B. . . . ¹—in the former part of the letter he speaks of you familiarly— This song in my last number I promised to insert in the next—but looking into Wednesday's *Courier* I saw the following note— To Correspondents : J.B.'s Song shall be inserted with some trifling alterations which Prudence has dictated— This alarms me—I have displaced the type (for the Song *is* set) and have been waiting anxiously to see whether it be the same or different—If it be the same and should come out in the *Courier before* Thursday it will injure my work—if *not* the same, and I

¹ Cf. the *Watchman*, No. III, 83-84 (March 17, 1796).

should [do] which [I] fear I must do—omit it in the next number, I may perhaps affront a friend both by the omission—and by the suspicion which caused it. For if it be the *same* song, 'tis a faulty mode etc., etc.

My dear Edwards! I wished much to hear from you, how you like the Watchman—or rather what you dislike in it—And if Friendship and Genius should inspire a Crotchet or two, to favor me with them. In the course of a fortnight I get into my new house in Oxford Street, Bristol, and in the Spring, I shall make a point of compelling you “by my so potent spells” to spend a fortnight or so with me—you might surely get your meeting served for one Sunday—My Essay on Fasting¹ has given *great* offence to the *Slang-men* of *Calvin's Superstition—Shops*, and even Mr. Estlin does not altogether relish it, and as to *Hort*, he sighs more than he *says*. Concerning these Things what says the Reverend Mr. Coates? God bless you—Mrs. Coleridge in languid but not unaffectionate terms desires me to give her love to you

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 27

To the REV. T. EDWARDS.

[Original letter, Trinity College, Cambridge.]

Sunday Morning,
March 20, 1796.

DEAR EDWARDS

Believe me grateful for your communications which appear this week. Erskine's speech is excellent—the quotation happy beyond anything I ever read. I see by the *Star* that Binns² is taken up by an order from the Secretary of State: if there be any particulars which have not appeared

¹ “The Essay on Fasting,” *i.e.*, “National Fasts,” appeared in the second number of the *Watchman*; its motto “Wherefore my Bowels shall sound like an Harp” gave particular umbrage.

² John Binns (1772-1860) was arrested as a member of the executive committee of the London Correspondence Society, an organization which advocated parliamentary reform and had revolutionary tendencies.

in the *Star* I beseech you, to be so kind as *immediately* to transmit them.

The Essay on Fasting has not promoted my work—indeed altogether I am sorry that I wrote it. What so many men wiser and better than myself think a solemn subject ought not to have been treated ludicrously. But it is one of the disadvantages attendant on my undertaking, that I am obliged to *publish* extempore as well as compose. My last number pleased beyond those which preceded it. From Birmingham I received an invocation to Liberty far above mediocrity; but I do not understand the word “Evanid” as there used. You will see the verses in the next *Watchman*. The letters from Liverpool I have received—poor Meanly! His mountains shalt melt beneath the fervent heat! I have received several *trimming* letters from anonymous correspondents—one of them written with great elegance. It begins thus.—“Alas! alas! *Coleridge* the digito-monstratus of Cambridge, [. . . ? . . .] Political Newsmonger, Newspaper-paragraph-thief, Re-retailer of retarded Scurrility, keeper of an asylum of old, poor and decayed jokes” etc.—then follow friendly admonitions, heartfelt condolences, and other *exacerbating Sugar-confits*—all that oil of Vitriol which these Pseudo-Samaritans pour into the wounds of misery. But I am perfectly callous except where Disapprobation tends to diminish Profit—there indeed I am all one tremble of Sensibility, marriage having taught me the wonderful uses of the vulgar article of life *Bread*. My wife, my wife’s Mother and little Brother, and George Burnett—five mouths opening and shutting as I pull the string! Dear Edwards I know you do not altogether approve of direct Petitions to Deity—but in case there *should* be any efficacy in them, out of pity to the Guts of others pray for the Brains of your friend. Formerly I could select a fine morning, chuse my road and take my airing upon my Pagasus right leisurely but now I am in stirrups all day, pen and sheet *are* my spurs. But so the World wags, and what is the use of complaining? Misery is an article which every market is so glutted with that it can nowhere be encouraged as an Import.

Yesterday Mrs. Coleridge miscarried ¹—but without danger and with little pain. From the first fortnight of pregnancy she has been so very ill with the Fever, that she could afford no nourishment to the Thing which might have been a Newton or an Hartley—it has wasted and melted away. I think the subject of Pregnancy the most obscure of all God's dispensations—it seems coercive against Immaterialism—it starts uneasy doubts respecting Immortality and the pangs which the Woman suffers seem inexplicable in the system of [Nature]. Other pains are only friendly admonitions that we are not acting as Nature requires—but here are pains most horrible in consequence of having obeyed Nature-Queen. How is it that Dr. Priestly is not an atheist? He asserts in three different places that God not only *does*, but *is* everything—But if God be everything, everything is God: which is all the Atheists assert. An eating, drinking, lustful God with no unity of *consciousness*—these appear to me the unavoidable Inferences from his philosophy—Has not Dr. Priestly forgotten that Incomprehensibility is as necessary an attribute of the First Cause as Love, or Poems, or Intelligence?

The Bishop of Llandaff ² has answered Payne—I mean to arrange all Payne's arguments in one column, and Watson's answers in another—it will do good. Estlin's sermon has some good points in it; Mr. Estlin hath not the Catenu-lating faculty. We want the silk-thread that ought to run through the Pearl Chain of Ratiocination.

Who and what is Bisset? and do you know where E.W. is? The Birminghamites are my best Friends—

God help you and believe me

Gratefully and affectionately

Your's S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Coleridge must have been mistaken about his wife's miscarriage. On March 12, 1796, he wrote to Edwards that he was hourly expecting Mrs. Coleridge to miscarry, and probably her illness led him to suspect a miscarriage. Hartley Coleridge was born on September 19, 1796.

² Richard Watson (1737-1816) became Bishop of Llandaff in 1782. Coleridge refers to Watson's "An Apology for the Bible; in a series of letters addressed to T. Paine, Author of . . . the Age of Reason, Part the Second, being an investigation of true and fabulous theology." London, 1796.

P.S. In the last Watchman instead of "New hope and joy," read "New life and joy th' expanding Flowret feels"—did you like the verse?

LETTER 28

To JOHN THELWALL.

[Original letter, Pierpont Morgan Library. John Thelwall (1764-1834), to whom this letter is addressed, had in 1794 barely escaped being found guilty of treason. His association with Wordsworth and Coleridge caused the government to be suspicious of them, and Wordsworth's landlord to refuse to renew a lease on the cottage at Alfoxden. In 1798 Thelwall withdrew from the political arena and opened a school for stutterers. Thelwall was also a poet.]

[May, 1796.]

DEAR THELWALL

Pursuing the same end by the same means we ought not to be strangers to each other. I have heard that you were offended by the manner in which I mentioned your name in the Protest against the Bills¹—I have looked over the passage again, and cannot discover the objectionable sentence. The words "unsupported Malcontent" are caught up from the well-known contemptuous pages of Aristocratic Writers and turned upon them: they evidently could not be spoken in my own person, when 5 or 6 lines below I affirm that you are the "Voice of Tens of Thousands"—certainly therefore not "an unsupported Malcontent". I meant the passage—(not as complimentary: for I detest the vile traffic of literary adulation) but as a Tribute of deserved praise. When I recited the Protest, the passage was "unsupported Malcontents" meaning myself and you—but I was afterwards seized with a fit of modesty and omitted myself.

I beg your acceptance of my Poems—you will find much to blame in them—much effeminacy of sentiment, much faulty glitter of expression. I build all my poetic pretensions on the Religious Musings²—which you will read with

¹ *A Protest against Certain Bills* and *A Plot Discovered* were alternate titles of the same political lecture.

² Coleridge's *Religious Musings* were first published in 1796. Cf. *Poems*, 108-125.

a *Poet's Eye*, with the same unprejudiceness, I wish, I could add, the same pleasure, with which the atheistic Poem of Lucretius. A Necessitarian, I cannot possibly disesteem a man for his religious or anti-religious opinions—and as an *Optimist*, I feel diminished concern. I have studied the subject deeply and widely—I cannot say without prejudice : for when I commenced the Examination, I was an Infidel.

I am obliged to conclude abruptly—I should be happy to hear from you, and if you ever visit Bristol, have a bed at your service—

With esteem

I am

Your's etc.,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 29

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN, Bridge-end, Glamorganshire.

[Original letter, the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed, *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 16-25.]

Monday Morning, July 4, [1796.]

MY DEAR AND HIGHLY-HONORED FRIEND

I am alarmed lest I should be obliged to leave Bristol before you come back, which, I assure you, would be chill and comfortless to my feelings beyond expression. On Friday last I received a message from Perry, the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*,¹ thro' Dr. Beddoes,² stating that if I would come to town and write for him, he would make me a regular compensation adequate to the maintenance of myself and Mrs. Coleridge. Grey, the co-editor with Perry, died at the Hotwells, on Wednesday or Thursday. Dr. Beddoes

¹ For Coleridge's contributions to the *Morning Chronicle*, see *A Bibliography . . . of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, T. J. Wise, 1913, 197-203. Coleridge did not become co-editor of this newspaper.

² Dr. Thomas Beddoes (1760-1808), father of the poet, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, excited the respect of Davy, Coleridge, and others because of his scientific work. He founded the famous Pneumatic Institution, where Davy's genius was first fostered.

thought it a fine opening for me—and added that Perry expected an immediate answer. My feet began mechanically to move towards your house—I was most uncomfortably situated. You and Mrs. Estlin out of Bristol—and Charles Danvers out of Bristol—and even Mr. Wade was absent. So I had nobody to speak to on the subject except Mr. Cottle, which I did, and he advised me to write to Perry immediately and accept his proposal. I did so, and expect tomorrow a letter from him with particulars, which I will immediately acquaint you with. My heart is very heavy, for I love Bristol and I do not love London. Besides, local and temporary politics are my aversion—they narrow the understanding, they narrow the heart, they fret the temper. But there are two Giants leagued together, whose most imperious commands I must obey, however reluctant—their names are *BREAD* and *CHEESE*.

I received from your Sister your kind note with Mr. Hobhouse's and Dr. Disney's kindness. You will believe, and will acquaint Dr. Disney, that I feel as I ought to do. I have myself written a few lines to Mr. Hobhouse.

You have had delightful weather, and you have that calm sunshine of the soul, that gives you senses to feel and enjoy it. I am with you in spirit : and almost feel “ the sea-breeze lift my youthful locks.” I would write Odes and Sonnets Morning and Evening, and metaphysicize at noon, and of rainy days I would overwhelm you with an Avalanche of Puns and Conundrums loosened by sudden thaw from the Alps of my Imagination. My most respectful and tenderest love to dear Mrs. Estlin, and ask her—“ If a Woman had murdered her Cousin, and there were no other proof of her guilt except that she had a *half-barrel Cask* in her possession—how would that convict her ? ” Answer. It would be evident that she had kild-er-kin. As I know that now she cannot mortify me by pretending not to enjoy the joke, she will laugh most intemperately. Do not ask her the next till a quarter of an hour's intermission : Why Satan sitting on a house-top would be like a decayed merchant ? Answer—Because he would be imp-over-a-shed.

Mr. Wade was talking of Davies in Clare Street, and asked me what I thought of a *religious attorney*. Why (quoth I) I should not doubt of his attachment to the *Law and the Profits* (i.e. Prophets), but should think his *Gospel* faith rather questionable.

My love to Mr. and Mrs. Hort, and ask Hort (who *hates* a Conundrum)—Why a murderer is like an unborn Jack-ass ? Answer. He is an ass-ass-in. i.e. ass in an ass.

You rejoice that the prince and princess are reconciled, although I fear

“ That never can true reconciliation grow
When wounds of deadly wrong have pierced so deep.”

I composed a few lines lately on the Princess, in which I simply expressed sympathy for her without endeavoring to heap odium on her husband. Indeed, as the lines are *addressed to her*, it would have been brutal to have abused her husband to her face.

To an Unfortunate Princess.

I sigh, fair injur'd Stranger ! for thy fate,
But what shall Sighs avail thee ? Thy poor Heart
Mid all the pomp and circumstance of State
Shivers in nakedness ! Unbidden start
Sad Recollections of Hope's garish dream,
That shap'd a seraph form, and named it Love ;
It's hues gay-varying as the Orient Beam
Varies the neck of Cytherea's Dove.
To one soft accent of domestic Joy
Poor are the Shouts that shake the high-arch'd Dome :
The Plaudits, that thy *public* path annoy,
Alas ! they tell thee, 'Thou'rt a Wretch *at home* !
Then O ! retire and weep ! their very Woes
Solace the guiltless. Drop the pearly Flood
On thy sweet Infant, as the *Full-blown* Rose
Surcharg'd with dew bends o'er it's neighb'ring *Bud* !
And ah ! that Truth some holy spell could lend
To lure thy Wanderer from the Syren's power :
Then bid your Souls inseparably blend,
Like two bright Dew-drops bosom'd in a flower ! ”¹

S. T. C.

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 152.

The Reviews have been wonderful. The Monthly¹ has *cataracted* panegyric on my poems, the Critical² has *cascaded* it; and the Analytical³ has *dribbled* it with very tolerable civility. The Monthly has at least done justice to my Religious Musings; they place it "on the very top of the scale of sublimity"!!!

I shall finish with some verses which I addressed to Horne Tooke⁴ and the company who met on June 28th, to celebrate his poll. I begin by alluding to the comparatively small number which he polled at his first contest for Westminster. You must read the lines, two abreast.

Britons! when last ye met, with distant streak
 So faintly promised the pale Dawn to break;
 So dim it stain'd the precincts of the Sky
 E'en *Expectation* gaz'd with doubtful Eye.
 But now such fair Varieties of Light
 O'er take the heavy-sailing Clouds of Night;
 Th' Horizon kindles with so rich a red,
 That, though the *Sun still hides* his glorious head,
 Th' impatient *Matin-bird assur'd of Day*,
 Leaves his low nest to meet it's earliest ray;
 Loud the sweet song of Gratulation sings,
 And high in air claps his rejoicing wings!
 Patriot and Sage! whose breeze-like Spirit first⁵
 The lazy mists of Pedantry dispers'd,
 (Mists, in which Superstition's *pigmy* band
 Seem'd Giant Forms, the Genii of the Land!)
 Thy struggles soon shall wak'ning Britain bless,
 And Truth and Freedom hail thy wish'd success.
 Yes *Tooke*! tho' foul Corruption's wolfish throng
 Outmalice Calumny's imposthum'd Tongue,
 Thy Country's noblest and *determin'd* Choice,
 Soon shalt thou thrill the Senate with thy voice;
 With gradual Dawn bid Error's phantoms flit,
 Or wither with the lightning's flash of Wit;

¹ Cf. *Monthly Magazine*, ii. 1796, 487.

² Cf. *Critical Review*, xvii. (June, 1796), 209.

³ Cf. *Analytical Review*, xxvii. (June, 1796), 627.

⁴ John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), ex-clergyman, radical politician, and philologist.

⁵ "ἐπεα πτερόεντα." S.T.C.

Or, with sublimer mien and tones more deep,
 Charm sworded Justice from mysterious Sleep,
 By violated Freedom's loud Lament,
 Her Lamps extinguish'd and her Temple rent ;
 By the forc'd tears, her captive Martyrs shed ;
 By each pale Orphan's feeble cry for bread ;
 By ravag'd Belgium's corse-impeded Flood,
 And Vendee steaming still with brothers' blood !
 And if amid the strong impassion'd Tale
 Thy Tongue should falter and thy Lips turn pale ;
 If transient Darkness film thy awful Eye,
 And thy tir'd Bosom struggle with a sigh :
 Science and Freedom shall demand to hear
 Who practised on a Life so doubly dear ;
 Infused the unwholesome anguish drop by drop,
 Pois'ning the sacred stream, they could not stop !
 Shall bid thee with recover'd strength relate
 How dark and deadly is a Coward's Hate :
 What seeds of death by wan Confinement sown,
 When prison-echoes mock'd Disease's groan !
 Shall bid th' indignant Father flash dismay,
 And drag the unnatural Villain into Day,
 Who to the sports of his flesh'd ¹ Ruffians left
 Two lovely Mourners of their Sire bereft !
 'Twas wrong, like this, which Rome's *first Consul* bore,
 So by th' insulted Female's name *he* swore
 Ruin (and raised her reeking dagger high)
 Not to the *Tyrants* but the *Tyranny* !! ²

God who hath blessed you, bless you ! Mrs. Coleridge
 begs her kindest love to you all.

Once more may God bless you all—and your obliged and
 grateful and truly affectionate friend

S. T. COLERIDGE

¹ "Dundas left thief-takers in Horne Tooke's House for three days
 with his two Daughters *alone* : for Horne Tooke keeps no servant."
 S.T.C.

² Cf. *Poems*, 150.

LETTER 30

To THOMAS POOLE.

[Original letter, British Museum. This letter and the one immediately following refer to Coleridge's abortive plan to undertake the education of the sons of Mrs. Elizabeth Evans (no relation to Mary Evans, his erstwhile sweetheart) of Darley Hall, Derby. See *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 154-155.]

Saturday, August, 1796.

MY DEAR POOLE

Read the enclosed. I acknowledge one pang ; but no after emotion of vain regret have I apostatized from the divine philosophy, which I profess. The black clouds, which hide the Sun from my view, are they not big with fertility ? And will they not drop it on me ?

I will write you from Derby.

Farewell, my beloved Friend ! Our dear Wade bids me tell you, that he loves and esteems you—You know that from your own heart.

S. T. COLERIDGE

Send back Mrs. Evans's letter in the parcel.

LETTER 31

To THOMAS POOLE, Stowey, near Bridgewater, Somerset.

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Biog. Lit.* (1847), ii. 370, and *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 154-155.]

Monday Morning. [August, 1796.]

MY BELOVED FRIEND

I was at Matlock, the place monodized by Bowles, when your letter arrived at Darley—and I did not receive it till near a week after—Indeed, my very dear Poole ! I wrote to you the whole truth—after the first moment I was perfectly composed, and from that moment to this have continued calm and light-hearted. I had just quitted you, and I felt myself rich in your love and esteem—You do not know how rich I feel myself. O ever found the same. And trusted, and beloved !

The ~~last~~ sentences of your letter affected me more than I can well describe. Words and phrases, which might perhaps have adequately expressed my feelings, the cold-blooded children of this World have anticipated and exhausted in their unmeaning gabber of flattery. I use common expressions—but they do not convey common feelings. My heart has thanked you. In preaching on Faith yesterday I said that Faith was infinitely better than Good Works—as the cause is greater than the effect—as a fruitful tree is better than it's Fruit and as a friendly Heart is of far higher value than the Kindness which it naturally and *necessarily* prompts. It is for that *friendly Heart* that I now have thanked you : and which I so eagerly accept of—for with regard to settlement, I am likely to be better off now than before—as I shall proceed to tell you.

I arrived at Darley on the Sunday. Mrs. Evans was much agitated when she met me : I hastened to relieve her embarrassment and—I told her to feel nothing on my account. “ I cannot be said to have lost that which I never had, and I have gained what I should not otherwise have possessed, your acquaintance and esteem.” “ Say rather (she exclaimed) my Love and Veneration.” Monday I spent at Darley—on the Tuesday, I and Mrs. Coleridge, and a Miss Willet went with Mrs. Evans's carriage to Matlock, where we stayed till Saturday. Miss Willet generally resides with Mrs. Evans and is an amiable young Old Maid. Young old maid—for she is only about 2440. Mrs. Evans did not herself accompany us—her husband having lingered and died at Matlock the last summer. Sunday we spent at Darley and on Monday Sara, and Mrs. Evans, and myself visited Oakover, a seat famous for a few first-rates of Raphael and Titian—and from thence to Ilam, a quiet vale hung round with woods—beautiful beyond expression and from thence to Dove-Dale, a place beyond expression tremendously sublime. Here in a divine cavern at the head of a divine little fountain we dined on cold meat—and returned to Darley, quite worn out with the succession of sweet sensations. On Tuesday we were employed in packing up and on Wednesday we were to

have set off. Mrs. Evans behaved with great liberality—she put in my hand a number of bank notes which amounted to 95£., and she gave Mrs. Coleridge all her baby clothes, which, I suppose, from the largeness of their quantity and the richness of their lace etc., are very valuable. But on the Wednesday Dr. Crompton who had just returned from Liverpool called on me, and made me the following—¹

That if I would take a House in Derby and open a Day-school confining my number to 12 scholars he would send three of his children on these terms : till my number was completed, he would allow me 100£ a year for them—when my number was completed, he should give me 20 guineas a year for each of them : the children to be with me from 9 to 12, and from 2 to 5—the two last hours (i.e., from 3 to 5) to be employed with their writing or drawing Masters who are to be paid by the parent. He has not the least shadow but that I shall complete my number almost instantly. Now 12×20 guineas = 240 guineas = 252£—and my evenings and mornings at my Disposal—Good things. So I accepted the offer, it being understood, that if anything better offered, I should accept it. There was not a House to be got in Derby—but I engaged with a man for a House now building and which is to be completed by the 8th of October—for 12 pound a year and the Landlord pays all the taxes except the Poor Rates. The Landlord is rather an intelligent fellow and has promised me to Rumfordize the chimneys : the plan is to commence in November. The intermediate time I shall spend at Bristol, at which place I shall arrive by the blessing of God on Monday next. This week I spend with Mr. Hawkes at Mosely, near Birmingham, in whose Shrubby I now write. I arrived here on Friday, having left Derby on Thursday. I preached here yesterday.

If Sara will let me, I shall see you for a few days in the course of the month.

Direct your next letter S. T. Coleridge, Oxford Street, Bristol.

¹ This plan also came to nothing and Coleridge settled four months later at Nether Stowey.

My love to your dear Mother and sister and believe me affectionately

Your ever faithful Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE

I shall write to my Mother and brother tomorrow.

LETTER 32

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Library of Owen D. Young. Published, *The Road to Xanadu* . . . , J. L. Lowes, 1931, 6041.]

[Nov., 1796.]

MY DEAR COTTLE

I feel pain in being disappointed—and still greater pain in the idea of disappointing—but I am seriously ill. The complaint, my medical attendant says, is nervous—and originating in *mental* causes. I have a Blister under my right ear and I take Laudanum every four hours, 25 drops each dose.¹ God be praised for all things ! A faith in goodness *makes* all nature good.

Your's affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE

LETTER 33

To JOHN THELWALL.

[Original letter, Pierpont Morgan Library.]

Sunday, November 13, 1796.

MY DEAR THELWALL

I ought indeed to have written to you and have felt no little pain from having omitted it. But the Post will not wait while I am writing apologies and excuses and I wish to speak of and concerning your affairs. This only let me say—if I could have written any thing pleasant, I would not have omitted or delayed.

The sketch of your plan I like well. The origin of Property and the *Mode of removing* it's evils, form the last

¹ Cottle's note, scribbled on the back of the letter, is interesting. "Oh ! that S.T.C. had never taken more than 25 drops each dose."

Chapter of my Answer to Godwin,¹ which will appear now in a few weeks. We run on the same ground, but we drive different Horses. I am daily more and more a religionist—you, of course, more and more otherwise. I am sorry for the difference, simply because it impoverishes our sympathies: for indeed it does not lessen my esteem and friendship. I will bestir myself *assiduously* and *immediately* by personal exhortation and by letter and in the course of a few days, I hope and trust, I shall be able to give you tidings of the resuscitation of virtue among us. But *immediately* write me the size of your intended work, price etc.—in short send me your printed proposals.

Dr. Beddoes mentioned your letter to me and meant to have written you—but he has been immersed in business and he could write nothing cheering. He respects you. I think, that temporary pamphlets must be bad speculations. They are “grass that in the morning” etc. But what is the *price* of your answer, etc., etc. Write immediately that I may know particulars: the price of that which you *have* published. I think I shall be able to get off about 30 for you, almost immediately.

Dr. Fox² is a very good man, and when you send the proposals etc., I will call upon him. I would mention names to you: but I know of none who would not rather be influenced by letter from me than from you; because these, whom I know in different places, are all *personally* attached to me, and the world is not yet virtuous enough, to suppose that the nakedness of a good cause is sufficient—but depend on it I will write immediately and every where: that is to say immediately I hear from you.

Have you, my dear Thelwall!—no plan for your future Life? What is the state of your body? Are you sickly, or strong? Is your body so weakened by exertion and anxiety, as to make *stimulants* (such as wine and constant *animal* food)

¹ See Letter 36, dated Dec. 1796, and footnote concerning this reply to Godwin.

² Probably the Dr. Fox who kept an asylum, under whose care Coleridge wished to place himself in 1814. See Letter 245, to Cottle, April 26, 1814, ii. 108.

necessary to your Health ? How many dear little ones have you ? I should like to know all things *about* you, for *you*, I am confident, I know already. *My* plan is formed—but of myself hereafter. You mention'd to me that you are not a man of Greek and Roman Literature. Have you read *variously* in your own language ? I mean, have you been in university phrase a *Fag* ? Or rather have you read little, but reflected much ? I ask these perhaps impertinent Questions because I wish to see you engaged in some *great* works—and for these various and profound study is assuredly a thing needful.

My Wife and little one (his name David Hartley) are marvellously well—Give my love to Your's—

Write *immediately*, and believe me with great sincerity
Your affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I was glad to hear from Colson that you abhor the morality of my Sonnet to Mercy¹—it is indeed detestable and the poetry not above mediocrity. What a foul song Horne Tooke has committed ! It has done harm—the aristocrats glory in it, the worthy among *us* shudder, the ignorant whet their *knives*.

LETTER 34

To THOMAS POOLE, Stowey near Bridgewater, Somerset.

[Original letter, British Museum. A few lines published in *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 179.]

Tuesday, half past five, November 15, 1796.

MY DEAREST POOLE

Since the receipt of your last letter I have written you *twice* ; and for this week past I have been punctually at the door of the post-office every evening at five o'clock, anxiously expecting to hear from you. My anxieties eat me up. I entreat you, write me, if it be only to say, that you have nothing to write. Have you thought concerning my sugges-

¹ See *Poems*, 93. The poem was first called *To an Old Man* (Effusion xvi.).

tions in the letter, I wrote during my illness? Yes! I am sure you have. Let me know the result of your reflections. Charles Lloyd¹ has been very ill, and his distemper (which may with equal propriety be named either Somnambulism, or frightful Reverie, or *Epilepsy from accumulated feelings*) is alarming. He falls all at once into a kind of night-mair: and all the Realities round him mingle with, and form a part of, the strange Dream. All his voluntary powers are suspended; but he perceives every thing and hears every thing, and whatever he perceives and hears he perverts into the substance of his delirious Vision. He has had two principal fits, and the last has left a feebleness behind and occasional flightiness. Dr. Beddoes has been called in.

I want consolation, my friend! my Brother! Write and console me!

My Wife and Child are very well.

Remember [me to] the G. *Cruikshanks*. I hope, his domestic anxieties have been happily terminated.

Your affectionately grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Estlin informs me, that he has received 15 guineas on my account; but he declined mentioning the names.² I suppose, it is from those of whom you spoke to me while we were riding that Sunday to Mr. Newton's.

If I should be likely to find out any temporary residence near you, I would immediately walk down to Stowey, to look about for it.

But write!

¹ Charles Lloyd (1775-1839), the poet, was the son of a wealthy Birmingham banker. In 1796, fascinated by Coleridge and wishing to imbibe some of his principles, Lloyd became a paying guest of the Coleridges. He soon showed symptoms of epilepsy and quarrelled with Coleridge. He was also partly responsible for the temporary alienation between Coleridge and Lamb in 1798. (See *Life*, 90.) Eventually Lloyd settled at Grasmere, near Wordsworth. His novel, *Edmund Oliver*, contains an exaggerated account of Coleridge's experiences as a Dragoon. Lloyd died insane at Chaillot, near Versailles.

² Through Estlin, a small sum of money was collected annually for Coleridge. The gifts, which were provided to relieve Coleridge of pecuniary anxiety, ceased after Coleridge received the Wedgwood annuity. See *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 228.

LETTER 35

To THOMAS POOLE, *Stowey near Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 180.]

*Monday Morning,
December, 1796.*

MY BELOVED FRIEND

Pardon the childish impatience which I have betrayed. The Sailor, who has borne cheerily a circumnavigation, may be allowed to feel a little like a coward, when within sight of his expected and wished for port.

We shall be more than content to live a year in the house you mentioned. It is not a beauty, to be sure, but it's vicinity to you shall overbalance it's Defects. Pray, take it for us, for a year—I would it were possible, that we could get into it in three weeks—for we must quit our house on Christmas day, and it will be awkward to take Lodgings for a week—and expensive.

I will *instruct* the maid in *cooking*—

Charles Lloyd continues well and desires his kind remembrance to you—so does Sara—and little Hartley has just left off sucking for half a second, and sends a half-smile to you— Love to your mother—

Your's affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. We should rejoice to be bruised by the right-fist of your love, in these ten days.

LETTER 36

To BENJAMIN FLOWER, *Cambridge.*

[Original letter, Huntington Library. Published with omissions *Monthly Repository*, 1834, 654-656. Benjamin Flower (1755-1829), who first published Coleridge's *Monody on the Death of Chatterton* in 1794, was a Cambridge publisher and editor of the *Cambridge Intelligencer*.]

[*Dec. 1796.*]

MY MUCH ESTEEMED FRIEND

I truly sympathize with you in your severe Loss, and pray to God that he may give you a santified use of your

Affliction. The death of a young person of high hopes and opening faculties impresses me less gloomily, than the Departure of the Old. To my more natural Reason, the former *appears* like a *transition* ; there seems an *incompleteness* in the life of such a person, contrary to the general order of nature ; and it makes the heart say, " this is not all." But when an old man sinks into the grave, we have seen the bud, the blossom, and the fruit ; and the unassisted mind droops in melancholy, as if *the Whole* had come and gone. But God hath been merciful to us, and strengthened our eyes thro' faith, and Hope may cast her anchor in a certain bottom, and the young and old may rejoice before God and the Lamb, weeping as tho' they wept not, and crying in the spirit of faith, Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord God my Holy One ? We shall not die ! I have known affliction, yea, my friend ! I have been myself sorely afflicted, and have rolled my dreary eye from earth to Heaven, and found no comfort, till it pleased the Unimaginable High and Lofty One to make my Heart more tender in regard of religious feelings. My philosophical refinements, and metaphysical Theories lay by me in the hour of anguish, as toys by the bedside of a child deadly sick. May God continue his visitations to my soul, bowing it down, till the pride and Laodicean self-confidence of human Reason be utterly done away ; and I cry with deeper and yet deeper feelings, O my Soul ! thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked ! The young Lady, who in a fit of frenzy killed her own mother, was the Sister of my dearest Friend, and herself dear to me as an only Sister.¹ She is recovered, and is acquainted with what she has done, and is very calm. She was a truly pious young woman ; and her Brother, whose soul is almost wrapped up in her, hath had his heart purified by this horror of desolation, and prostrates his spirit at the throne of God in believing Silence. The Terrors of the Almighty are the whirlwind, the earthquake, and the Fire that precede the still small voice of his Love. The pestilence of our lusts must be scattered, the strong-layed Foundations of our Pride

¹ Referring of course to Mary Lamb.

blown up,* and the stubble and chaff of our Vanities burnt, ere we can give ear to the inspeaking Voice of Mercy, "Why *will* ye die?"

My answer to Godwin will be a six shilling Octavo; and is designed to shew not only the absurdities and wickedness of *his* system, but to detect what appear to me the defects of all the systems of morality before and since Christ, and to shew that wherein they have been right, they have exactly coincided with the Gospel, and that each has erred exactly where and in proportion as, he has deviated from that perfect canon. My last chapter will attack the credulity, superstition, calumnies, and hypocrisy of the present race of Infidels. Many things have fallen out to retard the work; but I hope, that it will appear shortly after Christmas, at the farthest. I have endeavoured to make it a cheap book; and it will contain as much matter as is usually sold for eight shillings.¹ I perceive, that in the New Monthly Magazine the Infidels have it all hollow. How our ancestors would have lifted up their hands at the modest proposal for making experiments in favor of Idolatry!

Before the 24th of this month I will send you my *poetic endeavor*. It shall be as good as I can make it. The following lines are at your service, if you approve of them.

*Lines to a Young Man of Fortune who abandoned himself to an indolent and causeless Melancholy.*²

Hence that fantastic wantonness of Woe,
O Youth to partial Fortune vainly dear
To plunder'd *Want's* half-shelter'd Hovel go,
Go, and some hunger-bitten Infant hear
Moan haply in a dying Mother's Ear;
Or when the cold and dismal fog-damps brood
O'er the rank Church-yard with sear elm-leaves strew'd
Pace round some *Widow's* grave, whose dearer Part
Was slaughter'd where o'er his uncoffin'd limbs
The flocking Flesh-birds scream'd! Then, while thy Heart
Groans, and thine eyes a fiercer Sorrow dims,

¹ Coleridge's attack on Godwin was never written. Eventually Godwin was converted by Coleridge from atheism to theism (*Dict. of Nat. Biog.*).

² See *Poems*, 157.

Know (and the Truth shall kindle thy young Mind)
 What Nature makes thee mourn, she bids thee heal :
 O Abject ! if to sickly Dreams resign'd
 All effortless thou leave Earth's common weal
 A prey to the thron'd Murderers of Mankind !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Bristol, Dec. 11th.

Do you keep a Shop in Cambridge ? I seldom see *any* paper. Indeed, I am out of heart with the French. In one of the numbers of my Watchman I wrote " a remonstrance to the French Legislators " : ¹ it *contain'd my politics*, and the splendid Victories of the French since that time have produced no alterations in them. I am tired of reading butcheries and altho' I should be unworthy the name of Man, if I did not feel my Head and Heart awefully interested in the final Event, yet, I confess, my Curiosity is worn out with regard to the particulars of the Process. The paper, which contained an account of the departure of your friend had in it a Sonnet written during a Thunder-storm. In thought and diction it was sublime and fearfully impressive. I do not remember to have ever read so fine a *Sonnet*— Surely, I thought, this burst from no common feelings agitated by no common sorrow !—Was it your's ?—

A young man of fortune (his name, Gurney)² wrote and published a book of horrible Blasphemies, asserting that our blessed Lord deserved his fate more than any malefactor ever did Tyburn, (I pray heaven, I may incur no Guilt by transcribing it.) and after a fulsome panegyric adds that the name of *Godwin* will soon supersede that of Christ. Godwin wrote a letter to this man, thanking him for his *admirable* work, and soliciting the honor of his personal friendship !!! With affectionate esteem

Your's sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ The *Remonstrance to the French Legislators* appeared on April 27, 1796.

² This apparently refers to Hudson Gurney (1775-1864), who was " a young man of fortune " and a poet ; but I find no such " book of horrible Blasphemies " listed in the British Museum catalogue.

At the close of this week I go with my Wife and Baby to Stowey, near Bridgewater, Somersetshire : where you will for the future direct to me. Whenever there is *any thing* particular, I shall be thankful for your Paper. S. T. C.

LETTER 37

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, No. 8 *Westgate Buildings, Bath.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. The letter is undated, but the poems referred to were published in 1797 ; the letter seems, therefore, to have been written in 1797. See Southey's *Poems* (1797) for the poems mentioned in this letter.]

Tuesday Morning, [1797.]

I thank you, Robert Southey, for your poems, and by way of return present you with a collection of (what appear to me) the faults—"The Race of Banquo" and "To the Genius of Africa" ought to have rescued the ode from your very harsh censure. The latter is perfect, saving the last line which is one of James Hennings' *new thoughts* ; and besides who after having been whirled along by such a tide of enthusiasm can endure to be impaled at last on the needle-point of an Antithesis ? Of the Inscriptions I like the first and last the least : all the rest almost equally, and each very much. In the spirited and most original lines to your own miniature "wrong" *rhymes* with "solitary song". You, I doubt not, have associated feelings dear to you with the ideas "this little picture was for ornament designed" etc.—and therefore do right in retaining them. To me and, I suppose, most strangers the four last lines appear to drag excrementiously—the Poem would conclude more satisfactorily at "Spirit of Spenser ! was the Wanderer wrong ?" The fault of the four lines *seems* to be that having digressed you do not *lead* yourself to your subject, but without ceremony take a huge *leap* back again. Now though it is always well to *leave* the subject on the mind, yet rather than use such means I would forego it. "The Poem on the Death of an old Spaniel" will, I doubt not, be set to music by angelic and archangelic dogs in their state of exaltation. It is a poem

which will do good and that is saying a great deal⁵. In the Ode to Contemplation "the smoke long shadowing play" is scarcely accurate—"the smoke's long shadow" would surely be more natural and perspicuous. "The Musings on a Landscape" is a delicious poem. The words *To Him* begin the line awkwardly to my ear. The final pause at the end of the first two syllables of a line is seldom tolerable, except when the first two syllables form a trochee. The reason, I apprehend, is that to the ear they with the line foregoing make an Alexandrine. I have animadverted on these poems only which are my particular favourites—and now for the Penates which if I were to abandon my judgement to the impulse of present Feelings I should pronounce the most interesting poem of its Length in our Language. I have detected two faults only that a man amid the Miseries of a struggling Life should look back on the quiet happiness of childhood bears no resemblance to a Persian Monarch leaving the Luxuries of a Palace to revisit the cot where he had been a shepherd. But the *five first lines* of the Poem¹—they are very, very *beautiful*, but (pardon my obtuseness) have they any meaning? "The Temple of Paeon" does not, I presume, mean any real temple but is only an allegorical building expressing Poesy—Either ancient or modern. If modern how is its wall ruined? If ancient how do *you* hang up your silent harp on it? Does it allude to ancient poetry as expressing the subject of the Present Poem? yet you say, that you shall strike that "high and solemn strain" *ere* you hang it up. (Besides is *Paeon* the God of *Poetry*? I think that the ancients religiously confined the name to Apollo in his capacity of Healer and *Python-killer* but of this I am not certain.) However whether ancient or modern poesy be indicated or whatever may be the import of each distinct

¹ The first five lines of the *Hymn to the Penates* are :

" Yet one Song more ! one high and solemn strain
Ere Paeon ! on thy temple's ruin'd wall
I hang the silent harp : there may its strings,
When the rude tempest shakes the aged pile,
Make melancholy music. One Song more ! "

Southey later changed " Paeon " to " Phoebus."

image your general meaning is clear—namely that after this song you will intermit the writing of Poetry. Yet in the next lines you say, these many strings make melancholy music—i.e. This one song and then I will *discontinue* verse-writing—during which discontinuance I will write verses! Is all this only my obtuseness and frigidity? or have you not faultily mixed spiritual with corporal, allegorical meanings with meanings predicable only of catgut and rosin, bricks and mortar? A tempest may shake an aged pile, but what has a tempest to do with ancient poetry? If there were any respectable God with a respectable name who presided over the Law, or the affairs of active Life in general, you would have acted wiselier, (I speak not dogmatically but merely say I think you would have acted wiselier) if you had hung up your harp on the walls of his Temple and added—yet shall its strings (if any ruder storm is abroad) make melancholy music i.e. Tho' I intermit my Poetry in consequence of the calls of Business yet if any particular occasion arrive, I will *unhang* my harp. What if you *left* the harp in the fane of Vacuna? If these observations strike you as just I shall be sorry they did not strike me when you *read* the Poem. But indeed the Lines sound so sweet, and *seem* so much like sense, that it is no great matter. 'Tis a handsome and finely-sculptured Tomb and few will break it open with the sacrilegious spade and pick-ax of Criticism to discover whether or no it be not a *Cenotaph*.

I have been in bed for these two days, the effect of a dire cold and feverish complaint but I am better now and leave Bristol on Thursday—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 38

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[From a catalogue of Browne and Browne, Booksellers, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Partly published (with the most unjustifiable changes) in *Early Recollections*, i. 190-193. The date cannot be 1796 as Cottle indicates, but must be in the spring of 1797.]

[Spring, 1797.]

MY DEAREST COTTLE

I love and respect you as a brother, and my memory deceives me woefully, if I have not evidenced by the animated tone of my conversation, when we have been *tête-à-tête*, how much your company interested me. But when last in Bristol the day I meant to have devoted to you was such a day of sadness, that I could *do nothing*.—On the Saturday, the Sunday, and the ten days after my arrival at Stowey I felt a depression too dreadful to be described

So much I felt my genial spirits droop !
My hopes all flat, nature within me seem'd
In all her functions weary of herself.

Wordsworth's conversation, etc., roused me somewhat ; but even now I am not the man I have been—and I think never shall. A sort of calm hopelessness diffuses itself over my heart. Indeed every mode of life which has promised me bread and cheese, has been, one after another torn away from me—but God remains. I have no immediate pressing distress, having received ten pounds from Lloyd's father at Birmingham. I employ myself now on a book of *Morals* in answer to Godwin, and on my *Tragedy*. David Hartley, is well, and grows. Sara is well and desires a sister's love to you.

Tom Poole desires to be kindly remembered to you. I see they have reviewed Southey's *Poems* and my *Ode* in the *Monthly Review*.¹ Notwithstanding the Reviews, I, who in the sincerity of my heart am *jealous* for Robert Southey's fame, regret the publication of that volume. Wordsworth

¹ See *Monthly Review*, March 1797, 242, for review of the *Ode to the Departing Year*, and 297, for review of Southey's *Poems*.

complains, with justice, that Southey writes *too much at his ease*—that he seldom “feels his burthened breast

Heaving beneath th’ incumbent Deity.”

He certainly will make literature more *profitable to him* from the fluency with which he writes, and the facility with which he pleases himself. But I fear, that to posterity his wreath will look unseemly—here an ever living amaranth, and close by its side some weed of an hour, sere, yellow, and shapeless—his exquisite beauties will lose half their effect from the bad company they keep. Besides I am fearful that he will begin to rely too much on *story* and *event* in his poems, to the neglect of those *lofty imaginings*, that are peculiar to, and definitive of, the poet.¹ The *story* of Milton might be told in two pages—it is this which distinguishes an *Epic Poem* from a *Romance in metre*. Observe the march of Milton—his severe application, his laborious polish, his deep metaphysical researches, his prayers to God before he began his great poem, all that could lift and swell his intellect, became his daily food. I should not think of devoting less than 20 years to an Epic Poem. Ten to collect materials and warm my mind with universal science. I would be a tolerable Mathematician, I would thoroughly know Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Optics, and Astronomy, Botany, Metallurgy, Fossilism, Chemistry, Geology, Anatomy, Medicine—then the *mind of man*—then the *minds of men*—in all Travels, Voyages and

¹ With this passage Cottle takes the most astonishing liberties. Because his modifications and changes of the text are characteristic, (though perhaps here the offence is more flagrant than usual), I quote the passage as given by Cottle: “There are some Poets who write too much at their ease, from the facility with which they please themselves. They do not often enough

‘Feel their burdened breast
Heaving beneath incumbent Deity.’

So that to posterity their wreaths will look unseemly. Here, perhaps, an everlasting Amaranth, and, close by its side, some weed of an hour, sere, yellow, and shapeless. Their very beauties will lose half their effect, from the bad company they keep. They rely too much on story and event, to the neglect of those lofty imaginings that are peculiar to, and definitive of the Poet.” Obviously Cottle was trying to protect the name of Robert Southey, at the expense of the intelligibility of Coleridge’s letter.

Histories. So I would spend ten years—the next five to the composition of the poem—and the five last to the correction of it.

So I would write haply not unhearing of that divine and rightly-whispering Voice, which speaks to mighty minds of predestinated Garlands, starry and unwithering. God love you,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 39

To JOSIAH WADE, *Queen Square, No. 48—Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

*Stowey near Bridgewater,
March 16, 1797.*

MY DEAR FRIEND

If any set of circumstances can excuse me for suffering so kind, so very kind, a letter as your last, to remain so long unanswered, those circumstances are ready to plead for me—In the first place, my review business¹ had been suffered to accumulate so as to excite great discontent in my employers; for this last three weeks I have been compelled to devote great part of my time to it—Secondly Cottle has been clamorous about my new Edition,² and transcribing, alterations, etc., etc., have been forced on me by necessity—Thirdly Sheridan has sent to me to write a Tragedy, which he promises me to introduce on Drury Lane Theatre with every possible advantage, and wishes me to sketch out one immediately and send him the *sketch*, when he will give me his opinion of it.³ But fourthly poor Charles Lloyd has been

¹ See Greever, G., *A Wiltshire Parson and His Friends* (1926), 168-200, for four hitherto unidentified reviews by Coleridge. These reviews were of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794); *The Monk, A Romance* (1796); *Hubert de Sevrac* (1796); and *The Italian* (1797); and first appeared in the *Critical Review*.

² The second edition of Coleridge's poems appeared in 1797; in it were added poems by Lamb and Charles Lloyd.

³ This plan unfortunately came to naught. Coleridge wrote his tragedy *Orsorio* and sent it to Drury Lane in October, 1797; but Sheridan did not accept it. *Remorse* (a revision of *Orsorio*) was eventually produced at Drury Lane in 1813, through the intercession of Lord Byron.

ill indeed^{*}—within these ten days he has had five fits, all of them followed by a continued and agonizing Delirium of five or six hours.—So that what with bodily struggles and mental anguish and loss of sleep from sitting up with him, my temples ache, and my frame is feeble. My dear dear Wade ! never believe so very ill of me as to suspect that my epistolary silence originates in want of affection. I detest profession, but it eases my heart to tell you, how often I think and talk of you and of the unwearied kindness you have shewn me : indeed it is a common theme after supper. I speak of you with both my eyes and heart full—brimfull—

We are well—the baby and Mrs. Coleridge remarkably so—In my next, which I will write before I receive an answer to this I will give you a minute account of our Cottage and mode of life.

You are a good Prophet—my God ! into what a state have the Scoundrels brought this devoted kingdom— If the House of Commons would but melt down their faces, it would greatly assist the copper Currency— We should have *brass* enough.

Our love to Mrs. Wade—I rejoice to hear that you are likely to settle in Bristol—as then I shall hear from you and be more in the way of seeing you—

T. Poole desires his love—be particular in your next about Ann Wade—our David Hartley¹ is a very Seraph in Clouts—and laughs, till he makes us cry for very overflowing joy and tenderness

God Almighty love you and

Your ever grateful Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

You see in what a hurry I write.

¹ The baby was originally named David Hartley, but when he was baptized in 1803, Coleridge's enthusiasm for the metaphysician had died and the name was shortened to Hartley.

LETTER 40

To JOSIAH WADE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Early Recollections*, i. 53. Cottle implies that this letter was written in 1795, before Coleridge's marriage; but the fact that Coleridge (in a passage omitted by Cottle) refers to Mrs. Coleridge, makes Cottle's implied date impossible. I do not know what was the basis of the difference between Coleridge and Cottle. Cottle says that Coleridge took offence at a note requesting the more prompt delivery of manuscript. Obviously money and not manuscript was the cause of the difficulty.]

Monday Morning [1797.]

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

You have disabled yourself from *surprising* me. I have been lately too much in the habit of receiving from you fresh instances of zealous friendship and delicate generosity—I know how to *feel*—there is that within me which passeth all verbal professions. I decline your liberal offer for many reasons—first, Mr. Cottle has ever conducted himself towards me with unbounded kindness: and *one* unkind Act no, nor twenty, can obliterate the grateful remembrance of it. Secondly, by indolence and frequent breach of promise I had deserved a severe reproof from him, altho' my present brain-crazing circumstances made this an improper time for it. Thirdly, this morning I have received an apologetic letter from him—in which he entreats me to forgive him and to attribute his last letter to an infirmity of temper which we are all subject to at times. But while I decline one act of Kindness from you, I must solicit another—Namely that you would enable me to settle the enclosed Bill. This morning I received the Letter from Mr. Biggs¹—you will see the amount to [be] about 10*l*. In the course of a Month or 5 weeks I shall settle with my Booksellers when I will begin to repay you my long, long bill by instalments.

I hope to God you are better to-day—I will call in on you in the afternoon, if I possibly can—but am afraid, I shall not be able. Mrs. Coleridge is rather better and desires her best love and compliments.

Your affectionate friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹The printer.

LETTER 41

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Edinburgh University Library: from a transcript kindly sent me by the Librarian. Published in part, *Early Recollections*, i. 211.]

[Endorsed May, 1797.]

MY DEAR DEAR COTTLE

Have patience—and *every thing* shall be done. I think entirely of your Brother¹: in two days, I will think entirely for *You*—and by Wednesday next you shall have Lloyd's other poem, and all Lamb's²—*besides etc.*— I have written 1500 lines of *my Tragedy*—T. Poole is in extacies with it—he says, it has passion, well-conducted plot, stage-effect, and the Spirit of poetic language without its *technicalities*.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I have not received the Poet's Fate. Take the enclosed to the Library— I have sent a curious Letter to G. Catcott.³ A dog, he has all together made me pay 5s for postage.

LETTER 42

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN, *St. Michael's Hill, Bristol.*

[Original letter, the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed, *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 41-44.]

[Racedown Lodge, near Crewkerne.]
Saturday morning, [June, 1797.]

MY DEAR FRIEND

I wrote to you yesterday—and today I must write again. I shall have quite finished my *Tragedy* in a day or two; and then I mean to walk to Bowles, the poet, to read it to him, and have his criticisms,⁴—and then accordingly, as

¹ Amos Cottle (1768-1800), bookseller and author.

² *Poems by S. T. Coleridge, Second Edition. To which are now added Poems by Charles Lamb, and Charles Lloyd . . . 1797.*

³ George Catcott was the Librarian of the Bristol Library. Coleridge had kept books beyond the allotted time and had been fined.

⁴ Coleridge did not pay this visit to William Lisle Bowles until early September, 1797.

he advises, I shall either transmit the play to Sheridan, or go to London and have a personal interview with him. At present, I am almost shillingless ; I should be glad, therefore, if you could transmit me immediately a *five pound note* of the bank of England, directed

S. T. Coleridge,
Race-down Lodge,
near Crewkherne.

I calculate that by this time your anxieties are past ; mine will continue till I hear from you.

This is a lovely country, and Wordsworth is a great man. He admires your sermon against Payne much more than your last ; I suppose because he is more inclined to Christianity than to Theism, simply considered. The lines overleaf, which I have procured Miss Wordsworth to transcribe, will, I think, please you.

When I arrive at Bowles's, I will write again, giving you a minute account of the bard. God bless *you*, and *your's*, and all of us !

Most affectionately,
Your obliged friend
S. T. COLERIDGE.

her eye
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick. Seest thou that path ?
(The greensward now has broken its grey line ;)
There, to and fro she paced, through many a day
Of the warm summer : from a belt of flax
That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread
With backward steps. Yet, ever as there passed
A man, whose garments showed the Soldier's red,
Or crippled mendicant in Sailor's garb,
The little child, who sat to turn the wheel,
Ceased from his toil ; and she, with faltering voice,
Expecting still to learn her husband's fate,
Made many a fond inquiry ; and when they,
Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
Her heart was still more sad.—And by yon gate
That bars the traveller's road, she often sat,
And if a stranger-horseman came, the latch

Would lift, and in his face look wistfully,
 Most happy, if from aught discovered there
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
 The same sad question.—Meanwhile her poor hut
 Sank to decay : for he was gone, whose hand,
 At the first nippings of October frost,
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
 Checquered the green-grown thatch ; and so she sat
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone,
 Till this rest house by frost, and thaw, and rain
 Was sapped ; and, when she slept, the nightly damps
 Did chill her breast, and in the stormy day
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind,
 Even by the side of her own fire, yet still
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
 Have parted hence : and still, that length of road,
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,
 Fast rooted at her heart ; and, Stranger, here
 In sickness she remained, and here she died,
 —Last human tenant of these ruined walls.¹

LETTER 43

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Edinburgh University Library : from a transcript, kindly sent me by the Librarian. Published in part, *Early Recollections*, i. 274.]

June 29, 1797.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

I unfortunately gave away the loose-sheets, you sent me—what shall I do ? There are many errata—C. Lamb will probably be here in about a week. Could you not contrive to put yourself in a Bridgewater Coach—if T. Poole would fetch you in a one horse chaise to Stowey—What a delight would it not give us. By all means omit that one line—and if you like, the objectionable part in the first advertisement—I do not admit your reasoning against the latter part of the dedication—the possible *error* or intemperance to

¹ Cf. *The Excursion*, i. 880-916, *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford), 769-770.

which I alluded—was—All nations Curse thee ! etc., etc.—
in the Ode ⁶ 1—

I returned from Wordsworths' last night—God love you
and eke

Your affectionate friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

If Lamb *is* to come, I will write you when—

LETTER 44

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN, *St. Michael's Hill, Bristol.*

[Original letter the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed, *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 34-37.]

Stowey, Sunday, [July, 1797.]

MY DEAR FRIEND

I would accept your kind invitation immediately, but that I have a bad foot. A scald ² imperfectly healed, and I walked with it ; after one day's walking I was obliged to return with a wound in my foot. But if possible, I will ride to Bristol at the end of the week. Heaven forbid that there should not be worse vices of the mind than Prejudice—for *all* of us, more or less, must necessarily be prejudiced. The worst vice of the Intellect, I believe, is *malignant* Prejudice, and next to this, or perhaps co-equal with it, is *Indifference*. I have sometimes feared, from the dislike, the encreasing dislike, which I find in myself, to all *chirurgical operations*, that my mind is verging to this state ; it is certainly much nearer to it, than to any disquietude and restlessness of Temper concerning errors, which do not appear directly connected with vice and misery. I judge so much by the *fruits*, that I feel a constant yearning towards the belief that such tenets

¹ Line 139, *Ode to the Departing Year*. This poem was first published in pamphlet form, and at the same time in the *Cambridge Intelligencer*, December 31, 1796. *Poems*, 160-168.

² This scald was, of course, the occasion which enforced Coleridge to remain at home instead of accompanying Charles Lamb and Wordsworth on a walk. Coleridge gave expression to his feelings in *This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison*. See *Poems*, 178-181.

are *not* errors. Now all this applies to the present case. I cannot as yet reconcile my intellect to the sacramental Rites ; but as I do not see any ill-effect which they produce among the Dissenters, and as you declare from your own experience that they have *good* effects, it is painful to me even simply *to state my dissent*, and more than this I have not done, and, unless Christianity were attacked on this head by an Infidel of real learning and talents, more than this I do not consider myself as bound to do. I never even state my dissent unless to Ministers who urge me to undertake the ministry. My conduct is this—I omit the rites, and wish to say nothing about it ; everything that relates to Christianity is of importance ; but yet all things are not of equal importance ; and when the Incendiaries have surrounded the building, it is idle to dispute among ourselves whether an old stair-case was placed in it by the original Architect, or added afterwards by a meaner Hand. But notwithstanding this, it's little comparative importance, I cannot, I must not, play the hypocrite. If I performed or received the Lord's supper, in my present state of mind, I should indeed be eating and drinking condemnation. But this I need not say to you. As to Norwich, it is an *ugly* place, and an extravagantly *dear* place, and it is very, very far distant from all I love, animate and inanimate, and parties run high, and I am wearied with politics, even to soreness. I never knew a passion for politics exist for a long time without swallowing up, or absolutely excluding, a passion for Religion. Perhaps I am wrong : but so I think. However, I trust to see you by the end of the week. To Mrs. Estlin remember me affectionately, and kiss for me the dear little ones. May Heaven love you and him who ever feels for you the mingled affections of Son, Brother, and Friend—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 45

To THOMAS POOLE.

[Original letter, British Museum.]

Wednesday, July, 1797.

MY DEAR POOLE

If you are at leisure, will you send by Nanny the Coat etc., which you mentioned to me—as I wish to have it made fit for me by next Sunday—Sara bids me likewise remind you of some stockings, half silk and half-cotton, which *you* could not wear.

You will be my Elijah—and I will most reverentially catch the mantle, which you have cast off.

Why should not a Bard go tight and have a few neat things on his back? Eh? Eh? Eh!

God bless you

and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 46

To JOSIAH WADE, No. 6, Berkeley Place, Bristol.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. The passage on Thelwall appears in *Early Recollections*, i. 254-255.]

[Aug. 1, 1797.]

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

I meant to have surprized you by a visit at Berkeley Place—and therefore did not immediately answer your letter—Were I going on a Journey to Paradise I would defer it, to have the pleasure of seeing you a week at Stowey. I pray you come—do, do, my dear Wade! In very sincerity I know nothing in the ordinary events of life that would give me so great pleasure—Your letter cheered me. I was gloomy at your silence—You misunderstood my letter I meant only to say, that I should write so quick, that you *could not* answer my first before you would receive my second letter. From this I was prevented by reviews and a strange Visitor—and then I knew not where to direct to you, my dear fellow! do not let there be such pauses in our correspondence. I will

pledge myself to write you once every *fortnight*—if you will repay my letters.

What can I say to you of your dear baby? I heard of it, only from your Letter. A Tear came into my eye—and I have sighed many times since, when I have been walking alone—and the pretty Lamb has passed across my Memory. And all the comfort we can offer on such occasions, is sympathy.

Sara has had a miscarriage—but in so very early a stage, that it, occasioned but little pain, one day's indisposition and no confinement. Indeed, the circumstance is quite unknown, except to me. My little Hartley grows a beautiful child. T. Poole would be most joyful to behold your face.

John Thelwall is a very warm hearted honest man—and disagreeing, as we do, on almost every point of religion, of morals, of politics, and of philosophy, we like each other uncommonly well— He is a great favorite with Sara. *Energetic Activity*, of *mind* and of *heart*, is his Master-feature. He is prompt to *conceive*, and still prompter to *execute*— But I think, that he is deficient in that *patience* of mind, which can look *intensely* and *frequently* at the same subject. He believes and disbelieves with impassioned confidence— I wish to see him *doubting* and *doubting*. However, he is the man for *action*—he is intrepid, eloquent, and—honest. Perhaps the only *acting* Democrat, that *is* honest—for the *Patriots* are ragged cattle—a most execrable herd—arrogant because they are ignorant, and boastful of the strength of reason, because they have never tried it enough to know its *weakness*. O my poor Country! The Clouds cover thee—there is not one spot of clear blue in the whole heaven.

My love to all whom you love—and believe with brotherly affection, with esteem and gratitude, and every warm emotion of the heart

Your faithful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 47

To JOHN CHUBB.

[From the original letter in the possession of Mr. John B. Chubb. The letter is addressed to Mr. Chubb of Bridgewater. Coleridge was not successful in finding a retreat for Thelwall. Thelwall eventually settled at Llyswen, Wales.]

[Autumn, 1797.]

DEAR SIR

I write to you on the subject of Thelwall. He has found by experience that neither his own health or that of his Wife and children can be preserved in London; and were it otherwise, yet his income is inadequate to maintain him there. He is therefore under the necessity of fixing his residence in the Country. But by his particular exertions in the propagation of those principles which we hold sacred and of the highest importance, he has become, as you well know, particularly unpopular, thro' every part of the Kingdom—in every part of the Kingdom therefore some odium and inconvenience must be incurred by those who should be instrumental in procuring him a cottage there—but are Truth and Liberty of so little importance that we owe no sacrifices to them? And because with talents very great, and disinterestedness undoubted, he has evinced himself in activity and courage superior to any other patriot, must his country *for this* be made a wilderness of water to him? There are many reasons for his preferring this to any other part of the Kingdom, he will find the Society of men equal to himself in talents and probably superior in acquired knowledge—of men, who differ from each other widely in many very important opinions yet unite in the one great duty of unbounded *tolerance*. If the day of darkness and tempest should come, it is most probable that the influence of T. would be very great on the lower classes—it may therefore prove of no mean utility to the cause of Truth and Humanity that he had spent some years in a Society, where his natural impetuosity had been disciplined into patience, and salutary Scepticism, and the slow energies of a *Calculating* spirit.

But who shall get him a cottage here? I have *no power*—

and T. Poole is precluded from it by the dreadful state of his poor Mother's health and by his connection with the Benefit Club, the utilities of which he estimates very high, and these, he thinks, would be materially affected by any activity in favor of T. Besides, has he not already taken his share of odium? Has he not already almost alienated, certainly very much cooled, the affection of some of his relations, by his exertions on *my* account? And why should *one* man do *all*? But it must be left to every man's private mind to determine, whether or no his particular circumstances do or do not justify him in keeping aloof from all interference in such subjects. J. T. is now at Swansea, and expects an answer from me respecting the possibility of his settling here. He requested me to write to you. I have done it and you will be so kind (if in your power *today*) to give me one or two lines, briefly informing me whether or no your particular circumstances enable you to exert yourself in taking a cottage for him *anywhere* 5 or 6 miles round Stowey. He means to live in perfect retirement neither taking pupils or anything else.

It is painful to ask that of a person which he may find it equally distressing to grant or deny. But I do not ask anything; but simply lay before you the calculations on *our* side of the subject. Your own mind will immediately suggest those on the other side and I doubt not, you will decide according [to] the preponderance.

Believe me with respect etc.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 48

To THOMAS POOLE, *Stowey near Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Two lines published, *Life*, 78 note.]

Saturday Evening,

[*Poole's endorsement—Dec. 2, 1797.*]

MY DEAR POOLE

I write from Cottle's shop to request you if there have arriv'd any letters for me to send them addressed to Cottle's High Street—I have been several times at King's—he and

your Sister are remarkably well—Sara and I go there on Wednesday, stay for a day or two, and homeward for Stowey—I received a letter from Linley, the long and the short of which is that Sheridan rejects the tragedy—his *sole* objection is—the obscurity of the three last acts.¹

The Estlins, and Cottle, and Wade all desire to be kindly remembered to you—My love to your dear Mother and to Ward²—and believe me, as ever, Your's, my best and dearest Friend! Most affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 49

To JOSIAH WEDGWOOD.

[Original letter, Wedgwood Museum, Etruria. Published, *Coleridge and the Wedgwood Annuity*, E. L. Griggs, *Review of English Studies*, vol. vi. No. 21 (January, 1930). The unpublished letters from Coleridge relative to the Wedgwood annuity were kindly placed at my disposal by the late Major Frank Wedgwood.

The details of the Wedgwood annuity to Coleridge may be summarized as follows. In December, 1797, hearing that Coleridge was about to accept the incumbency of the Unitarian Chapel at Shrewsbury, Tom and Josiah Wedgwood (sons of the famous potter) sent him a draft for £100, that he might not handicap his genius by uncongenial work. Coleridge at first accepted the draft (in the letter given below) but later returned it with a long letter of explanation (Letter 50, Jan. 5, 1798). After this the Wedgwoods offered Coleridge an annuity of £150 for life, payment to be "independent of everything but the wreck of our fortune," and Coleridge accepted (see Letter 54, Jan. 17, 1798). In 1812, after Tom Wedgwood's death (in 1805) Josiah Wedgwood withdrew his (Josiah's) share of the annuity, because of financial reverses. (See Letter 233, Dec. 1, 1812.) For a fuller account of the details, see *Coleridge and the Wedgwood Annuity*, the *Review of English Studies*, vol. vi. No. 21 (Jan. 1930).]

Stowey, near Bridgewater.
December 27, 1797.

DEAR SIR

I received your letter, with the enclosed order yesterday. You have relieved me from a state of hesitation and

¹ This proves conclusively that Coleridge did hear of the fate of his tragedy, a fact which he later seems to have forgotten. (See *Life*, 78.) Linley was Sheridan's brother-in-law.

² Thomas Ward was Poole's articulated apprentice; he later became Poole's partner. Coleridge was very devoted to Ward and often refers to him. Ward was not merely Poole's apprentice, but also served as a copyist and transcribed a number of Coleridge's letters.

perplexity ; and have given me the tranquillity and leisure of independence for the next two years. I am not deficient in the ordinary feelings of gratitude to you and Mr. T. Wedgwood¹ ; but I shall not find them oppressive or painful, if in the course of that time I shall have been acquiring knowledge for myself, or communicating it to others ; if either in act or preparation I shall have been contributing my quota to the cause of Truth and Honesty—

I am

With great respect and affection

Your obliged etc.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 50

To JOSIAH WEDGWOOD.

[Original letter, Wedgwood Museum, Etruria. There is a copy of the letter in Ward's handwriting in the British Museum (Add. MSS. 35, 343, ff 160-162). Published, *Coleridge and the Wedgwood Annuity, Review of English Studies*, vol. vi. No. 21 (January, 1930).]

Stowey, near Bridgewater,

Jan. 5th, 1798.

DEAR SIR

By the inclosed you will understand the occasion of this letter. Your Brother and yourself will be pleased with my conduct, if I shall make it appear probable to you, that the purposes, for which you sent and I accepted so large a Bill, will be better answered by my returning than by my retaining it. You wished to remove those urgent motives which might make it necessary for me to act in opposition to my principles : you wished to give me leisure for the improvement of my Talents at the same time that my mind should be preserved free from any professional Bias which might pervert, or at least hamper, the exertion of them. I will state to you with great simplicity all that has passed thro' my mind on these subjects. The affectionate esteem, with which I regard your character, makes this openness pleasant

¹ Coleridge usually spells the name Wedgwood, although both Tom and Josiah Wedgwood omit the 'e.' The name is now always spelled Wedgwood.

to me : and your kindness seems to have authorised the freedom, which I am about to take in being so diffuse concerning my own affairs.

If a Man considered himself as acting in opposition to his principles *then only* when he gave his example or support to actions and institutions, the existence of which produces *unmingled* evil he might perhaps with a safe conscience perpetrate any crime and become a member of any Order. If on the other hand a man should make it *his principle* to abstain from all modes of conduct, the general practice of which was not permanently useful, or at least absolutely harmless, he must live, an isolated Being : his furniture, his servants, his very cloathes are intimately connected with Vice and Misery. To preserve therefore our moral feelings without withdrawing ourselves from active life, we should, I imagine, endeavour to discover those evils in society which are the most pressing, and those of which the immediate Removal appears the most practicable : to the removal of these we should center our energies, for the removal of them be prepared to make any sacrifices. In other things we *must* compound with a large quantity of evil—taking care to select from the modes of conduct, which may be within our choice, those in which we can do the most good with the least evil. Now I shall apply this to myself. As far as I am able to decide, the most pressing evils and those of which the speedy removal is the most practicable, are these—the union of Religion with the Government, and those other political Institutions and abuses which I need not name ; but which not only produce much evil directly and per se, but likewise perpetuate the causes of most other evils. Do not think me boastful when I assert that rather than in any way support any of these, I would undergo Poverty, Dependence, and even Death. There remain within my choice two Sources of Subsistence : the Press and the Ministry. Now as to the Press, I gain at present a guinea a week by writing to the *Morning Post*¹—and as my expenses, living as I now do, will not exceed 100*£*

¹ Coleridge began contributing to the *Morning Post* on December 7, 1797.

a year—or but little more, even including the annual 20*l*. for which my wife's mother has a necessity—I could by means of your kindness subsist for the two next years, and enjoy leisure and external comfort. But anxiety for the future would remain and increase, as it is probable my children will come fast on me : and the Press, considered as a Trade, is perhaps only not the worst occupation for a man who would wish to preserve any delicacy of moral feeling. The few weeks I have written for the Morning Post, I have felt thus—Something must be written and written immediately—if any important Truth, any striking beauty, occur to my mind, I feel a repugnance at sending it garbled to a newspaper : and if any idea of ludicrous personality, or apt anti-ministerial joke, crosses me, I feel a repugnance at rejecting it, because *something must be written*, and nothing else suitable occurs. The longer I continue a hired paragraph-scribbler, the more powerful these Temptations will become ; and indeed nothing scarcely that has not a *tang* of personality or *vindictive* feeling, is pleasing or interesting, I apprehend, to my Employers. Of all things I most dislike party-politics—yet this sort of gypsie Jargon I am compelled to fire away. To the *Ministry* I adduced the following objections at the time that I decided against entering into it. It makes one's livelihood hang upon the profession of *particular opinions* : and tends therefore to warp the intellectual faculty ; to fasten convictions on the mind by the agency of it's wishes ; and if Reason should at length dissever them, it presents strong motives to Falsehood or Simulation. Secondly, as the subscriptions of the Congregation form the revenue, the Minister is under an inducement to adapt his moral exhortations to their wishes rather than to their needs. (Poor Pilkington of Derby was, I believe, obliged to resign on account of his sermons respecting Riches and Rich Men.) Thirdly, the routine of Duty brings on a certain sectarian mannerism, which generally narrows the Intellect itself, and always narrows the sphere of its operation. In answer to these objections it may be observed : first, that I see the contingency of these evils very distinctly, and in proportion to my

clear perception of them it is probable that I shall be able to guard against them. Secondly, the Press, considered as a *Trade*, presents still greater temptations—and this is not a controversy concerning absolute, but concerning *comparative* good. Thirdly, the income of that place, which is now offered to me, does not depend on the congregation ; but is an estate. This weakens certainly, tho' as certainly does not remove, the second objection. Fourthly—The principal of these objections are weak or strong in proportion to the care and impartiality with which the particular opinions had been formed previously to the assumption of the ministerial office ; in as much as the probability of a change in these opinions is therefore proportionally lessened. Now, not only without any desire of becoming an hired Teacher in any sect but with decisive intentions to the contrary I have studied the subject of natural and revealed religion—I have read the works of the celebrated Infidels—I have conversed long, and seriously, and dispassionately with Infidels of great Talents and information—and most assuredly, my faith in Christianity has been confirmed rather than staggered. In teaching it therefore, at present, whether I act *beneficently* or no, I shall certainly act *benevolently*. Fifthly—The *necessary* creed in our sect is but short—it will be necessary for me, in order to my continuance as an Unitarian Minister to believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah—in all other points I may play off my Intellect *ad libitum*. Sixthly—that altho' we ought not to brave temptations in order to shew our strength, yet it would be slothful and cowardly to retire from an employment, because tho' there *are* no temptations at present, there *may be* some hereafter. In favor of my assuming the ministerial office it may be truly said, that it will give me a regular income sufficient to free me from all anxiety respecting my absolute wants, yet not large enough to exempt me from motives, even of a pecuniary nature, for literary exertion. I can afford to dedicate three or twice three years to *some one work*, which *may be* of benefit to society, and will certainly be uninjurious to my own moral character : for I shall be positive at least that there is no falsehood or immorality in it pro-

ceeding from haste or necessity—If I do enter on this office, it will be at Shrewsbury—I shall be surrounded by a fine country, no mean ingredient in the composition of a poet's happiness—I shall have at least five days in every week of perfect leisure—120*£* a year—a good house, valued at 30*£* a year—and if I should die and without any culpable negligence or extravagance have left my family in want, the Congregations are in the habit of becoming the guardians. Add to this, that by Law I shall be exempted from military service—to which, Heaven only knows how soon we may be dragged. For I think it not improbable, that in case of an invasion our government will serve all, whom they choose to suspect of disaffection, in the same way that good King David served Uriah—“set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest Battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die.” I do not wish to conceal from you that I have suffered more from fluctuation of mind on this occasion than on any former occasion : and even now I have scarcely courage to decide absolutely. It is chilling to go among *strangers*—and I leave a lovely country, and one friend so eminently near to my affections that his Society has almost been consolidated with my ideas of happiness.¹ However—I shall go to Shrewsbury, remain a little while amongst the congregation : if no new argument arise against the Ministerial office, and if the old ones assume no new strength, there I shall certainly pitch my *tents*, and *probably* shall build up my permanent Dwelling. Whatever is conducive to a man's real comforts is in the same degree conducive to his utility—a permanent income not inconsistent with my religious or political creeds, I find necessary to my quietness—without it I should be a prey to anxiety, and anxiety with me always induces Sickliness, and too often Sloth : as an overdose of Stimulus proves a narcotic.

You will let me know of the arrival of the Bill : and it would give me very great pleasure to hear, that I had not forfeited your esteem by first accepting, and now returning it. I acted, each time, from the purest motives possible on such an occasion : for my public usefulness being incom-

¹ Tom Poole. See next letter (p. 90).

patible with personal vexations, an enlightened Selfishness was in this case the only species of Benevolence left to me.

Believe me, dear Sir, with no ordinary feelings of esteem and affection for you and your family,
sincerely yours,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 51

To JOSIAH WADE, No. 6 Barclay Parade, Bristol.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published in part, *Early Recollections*, i. 305-306.]

Saturday [January, 1798.]

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

This last fortnight has been eventful—I received an hundred pounds from Josiah Wedgewood, in order to prevent the necessity of my going into the Ministry—I have received an invitation from Shrewsbury to be the Minister there—and after the fluctuations of mind which have for nights together robbed me of sleep, and I am afraid of Health, I have at length returned the order to Mr. Wedgewood with a long letter explanatory of my conduct, and accepted the Shrewsbury Invitation—so I shall be with you by the Middle of next week—But I am moneyless, and want 20£. For 10£ I have written to Mr. Estlin, 5£ I will get, somehow or other from the Editor of the New Monthly Magazine, and 5£ I must borrow of you, if you can lend it me with perfect convenience but, I beseech, do not put yourself out of your way in these hard times—for if it be not perfectly convenient to you, I doubt not, I shall be able to get it somewhere or other—

My dear friend, T. Poole, is not convinced of the *expediency*, either to the public or myself, of my returning the Draft and accepting the congregation— It would have been a heart saddening thing to have parted from him in any way, but to part from him, he not satisfied that there is any necessity or propriety in my parting from him, is *very* painful. But more of this when we meet—let me hear from you immediately—

God love you

and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 52

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN, *St. Michael's Hill, Bristol.*

[Original letter, the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed, *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 55-58.

This letter is dated merely "Saturday Morning"; but as Coleridge returned the £100 draft from the Wedgewoods on Jan. 5, 1798, and received the offer of the annuity on January 16, this letter must have been written January 6, 1798.]

Saturday Morning, [Jan. 6, 1798.]

MY DEAR FRIEND

After much and very painful hesitation I have at length returned the Draft to Mr. Wedgewood with a long letter explanatory of my conduct. The first sunny morning that I walk out, at Shrewsbury, will make my heart die away within me—for I shall be in a *land of Strangers*! For I shall have left a Friend whose sympathies were perfect with my manners, feelings and opinions—and what is yet more painful, I shall have left him unconvinced of the *expediency* of my going, public or personal. I could not *stay* with an easy conscience; but whether I shall be happy so far removed from any who love me, I know not. This I know—I will make myself contented by struggling to do my Duty.

I have written to Mr. Wood and to Mr. Row—promising to be at Shrewsbury by the latter end of next week. Tomorrow I perform Mr. Howel's¹ duty—the good old man has gone to London with his daughter to seek surgical assistance for her.

I am now, utterly without money; and my account stands thus. I owe Biggs 5£., Parsons, the bookseller, owes me more than this considerably; but he is a rogue, and will not pay me. I have not paid Mrs. Fricker her quarterly allowance—in short—

	£	s.	d.
Biggs - - - - -	5	0	0
Mrs. Fricker - - - - -	5	5	0
A quarter's rent due Dec. 25th - - - - -	2	2	0

¹ Mr. Howel, a Unitarian minister.

1797

Maid's Wages	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Shoemaker	-	-	-	-	1	13	0
Coals	-	-	-	-	2	6	0
Chandler	-	-	-	-	0	12	0
Sundries	-	-	-	-	0	12	0

£18 11 0

This is all I owe in the world : now in order to pay it I must borrow ten pound of you, 5£ of Mr. Wade, and will sell my Ballad to Phillips who I doubt not will give me 5£ for it—I suppose, that my Friends will not withdraw their annual subscription of 5£ *this year* ; afterwards of course I should not want it—so that, you see, I propose to anticipate your's, Mr. Hobhouse's, and Mr. Wade's subscriptions.

God love you ! I will be with you as soon as Riches, instead of making *themselves* wings, shall make a pair for *my* shoulders—at present, I am absolutely unfledged. Your's with filial and fraternal affection

S. T. COLERIDGE.

My affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Estlin.

LETTER 53

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN, St. Michael's Hill, Bristol.

[Original letter, the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed, *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 63-72.]

[January, 1798.]

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

I answer your letter to Mr. Row,¹ because it is probable that I must say all that he would say, and that I shall have to say what he could not say for me. We have talked over the affair seriously, and at the conclusion of our conversations our opinions have nearly coincided. First of all I must give you the *information*, which I have received on this affair, and then I will proceed to make some direct obser-

¹ Mr. Row (or Rowe) was the Unitarian Minister at Shrewsbury.

vations on your very kind letter. In a letter full of elevated sentiments Mr. Josiah Wedgewood offers me from himself and his brother Thomas Wedgewood, "an annuity of 150£ for life, legally secured to me, *no condition whatever being annexed.*" You seemed by the phrase of "a family in this neighbourhood" to suppose that the offer proceeded from or included the Wedgewoods at Cote House; this is not the case. Josiah Wedgewood lives in Staffordshire. Now nothing can be clearer than that I cannot accept the ministerial salary at Shrewsbury and this at the same time. For as I am morally certain that the Wedgewoods would not have thought it their duty, or rather would have found it to be *not* their duty, to have offered me 150£ yearly, if I had been previously possessed of an 150£ regular income, it follows indisputably, that I cannot accept the first 150£ with the determination to accept the latter 150£ immediately after. But (independently of the *animus donantis* which is conclusive in this case) were I to accept the salary at Shrewsbury, I *would not* accept the annuity from the Wedgewoods. Many deserve it equally; and few would want it less. It is almost equally clear to me, that as two distinct and incompatible objects are proposed to me, I ought to choose between them, with reference to the advantages of each, and not make the one a dernier resource if the other should fail. No, anteriorly to the decision of the Congregation here, I will send the Wedgewoods a definite answer, either accepting or declining the offer. If I accept it, I will accept it *for itself*, and not to console me for a disappointment in the other object, which I should have preferred if I could have ensured it. Now then I can state clearly the Question on which I am to decide. "Shall I refuse 150£ a year for life, as certain, as any fortune can be, for (I will call it) another 150£ a year, the attainment of which is not yet certain, and the duration of which is precarious?" You answer, "Yes! the cause of Christianity and practical Religion demands your exertions. The powers of intellect, which God has given you, are given for this very purpose, that they may be employed in promoting the best interests of mankind." Now the

answer would be decisive to my understanding, and (I think you know enough of me to believe me when I say that were the annuity 1,500£ a year instead of 150£) it should be decisive on my conduct, if I could see any reason why my exertions for Christianity and practical Religion depend, I will not say, on my being at Shrewsbury, but—on my becoming a stipendiary and regular minister. It makes me blush, I assure you, sitting *alone* as I now am, at the idea of mentioning two such names as I am about to do, with any supposable reference to my own talents, present or to come, but *the kind is not altered by the degree*. Did Dr. HARTLEY¹ employ himself for the promotion of the best interests of mankind? Most certainly. If instead of being a physician he had been an hired Teacher, that he would not have taught Christianity *better*, I can certainly say, and I suspect, from the vulgar prejudices of mankind that his name might have been less efficacious. That, however, is a Trifle. A man who thinks that Lardner² defended Christianity because he received 50 or 60£ a year for preaching at Crouched Friars, must be such a booby that it cannot be of much consequence what he thinks; but Lardner! do you really think, my dear Friend! that it would have been of much detriment to the Christian world if the author of the *Credibility*, etc., had never received or accepted the invitation at Crouched Friars? Surely not. I should be very unwilling to think that my efforts as a Christian minister depended on my preaching regularly in one pulpit. God forbid! To the cause of Religion I solemnly devote all my best faculties; and if I wish to acquire knowledge as a philosopher and fame as a poet, I pray for grace that I may continue to feel what I now feel, that my greatest reason for wishing the one and the other, is that I may be enabled by my knowledge to defend Religion ably, and by my reputation to draw attention to the defence of it. I regard every experiment that Priestley made in Chemistry, as giving *wings* to his more sublime theological

¹ David Hartley (1705-1757) whose *Observations on Man* was of such a great influence on Coleridge.

² Nathaniel Lardner (1684-1768).

works. I most assuredly shall preach often, and it is my present purpose alternately to assist Dr. Toulmin¹ and Mr. Howel one part of every Sunday, while I stay at Stowey. "I know (you say) that it was from the purest motives that he thought of entering into the ministry." My motives were as pure as they could be, or ought to be. Surely an *especial* attachment to a society, which I had never seen, was not one of them; neither if I were to permit myself to be elected the Minister here, should I consider the salary as the payment of my services, my stated and particular services to the people *here*, but as a means of enabling myself to employ all my time both for their benefit and that of *all* my fellow-beings. Two modes of gaining my livelihood were in my power. The press without reference to Religion, and Religion without reference to the Press. (By the *Press as a Trade* I wish you to understand, reviewing, newspaper-writing, and all those things in which I proposed no fame to myself or permanent good to society, but only to gain that bread which might empower me to do both the one and the other on my vacant days.) I chose the latter. I preferred, as more *innocent* in the first place, and more *useful* in the second place, the *ministry* as a Trade to the Press as a Trade. A circumstance arises, and the necessity ceases for my taking up either—that is, as a means of providing myself with the necessities of Life. Why should I not adopt it? But you continue—"And I cannot but rejoice that he has it in his power to demonstrate this (i.e., the purity of my motives) to the satisfaction of others." It is *possible* then that some may say, "While he wanted money, he was willing to preach the Gospel in order to get [it]—when that want ceased, his zeal departed." Let them say it. I shall answer most truly—While I could not devote my time to the service of Religion without receiving money from a particular congregation, I subdued the struggles of reluctance, and would have submitted to receive it. Now I am enabled as I have received freely, freely to give. If in the course of a few years I shall have appeared neglectful of the cause of Religion, if by my

¹ Dr. Toulmin, the minister at Taunton.

writings and preachings I shall not have been endeavouring to propagate it, then and not till then the charge will affect me. I have written you as the thoughts came uppermost. I might say a great deal more. I might talk of Shrewsbury in particular and state particular reasons of attachment to Stowey, but I choose to confine myself to generals. Anterior to my conversation Mr. Row thought on the whole that I ought to accept the annuity. He desires me to say, that he will leave this place on the Wednesday of next week, for Bristol. I will serve for him as long as he chuses.

Your's most affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. To this add that the annuity is independent of my health, etc., etc., the salary dependent not on health but on 20 caprices of 20 people.

LETTER 54

To JOSIAH WEDGWOOD.

[Original letter, Wedgwood Museum, Etruria, Published, *Coleridge and the Wedgwood Annuity*, *Review of English Studies*, vol. vi. No. 21 (January, 1930).]

Shrewsbury, January 17, 1798.

DEAR SIR

Yesterday morning I received the letter which you addressed to me in your own and your brother's name. Your benevolence appeared so strange and it came upon my mind with such suddenness, that for a while I sat and mused on it with scarce a reference to myself, and gave you a moral approbation almost wholly unmingled with those personal feelings which have since filled my eyes with tears—which do so even now while I am writing to you. What can I say? I accept your proposal not unagitated but yet, I trust, in the same worthy spirit in which you made it.—I return to Stowey in a few days. Disembarrassed from all pecuniary anxieties yet unshackled by any regular profession, with powerful motives and no less powerful propensities to honourable effort, it is my duty to indulge the hope that at some

future period I shall have given a proof that as your intentions were eminently virtuous, so the action itself was not unbeneficent.

With great affection and esteem

I remain

Yours sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 55

- To THOMAS POOLE, *Stowey near Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum.]

Saturday Morning,

[*Poole's endorsement—Jan. 27, 1798.*]

MY DEAREST POOLE

I thank you, heart-wise, for the Joy you have in my Joy—I received a very affectionate letter from Thomas Wedgwood last night and answered it immediately. He desires me to meet him at Cote House. I shall therefore leave this place on Monday morning and shall, God willing, breakfast with him on Tuesday morning—on which day I will write you—The people here absolutely *consume* me. The clergymen of the Church are eminently courteous, and some of them come and hear me. If I had stayed, I have reason to think that I should have doubled the congregation almost immediately.¹ With two sermons to meditate in each week, with many letters to write, with invitations for dinner, tea, and supper in each day, and people calling in, and I forced to return morning calls, every morning, you will not be surprised, tho' you will be vexed to hear, that I have written nothing for the Morning Post, but I shall write immediately to the Editor.

¹ It will be of interest to include here a letter from Mr. J. Wood (an official in the Unitarian Church) to Coleridge. This letter shows how highly Coleridge was respected. It was of one of these sermons of Coleridge's that Hazlitt wrote in the *Liberal* (iii. 1823).

"*January 27, 1798.*

DEAR SIR

The motive for your declining to accept a small remuneration for the expence and trouble you have incurred by your journey to Shrewsbury,

I long to be at home with you, and to settle and persevere in, some mode of repaying the Wedgewoods thro' the medium of Mankind—I wish to be at home with you indeed, indeed—My joy is only in the bud here. I am like that tree, which fronts me—the Sun shines bright and warm, as if it were summer, but it is not summer—and so it shines on leafless boughs. The beings who know how to sympathize with me are my foliage.

affords a fresh proof of those elevated sentiments, which must add to our regret for the disappointment we have experienced. Circumstanced however as you now are, we are compelled to allow the justice of those motives, which have induced you to withdraw yourself from an Office we had promised ourselves you would have filled with so much honour to yourself and satisfaction to our Society.

Permit me however again to request in the name of that Society, that you will accept of the trifle tendered, as a small compensation for your Services during your residence among us. Feeling as we do, for the unexpected interruption of that pleasure and edification we had so much reason to promise ourselves from your future connection with us ; yet believe me dear Sir we are not so selfish as not to feel also the most lively satisfaction, at an occurrence which places you in a situation more conformable to your inclinations and Views. When great and extraordinary abilities, are combined with pure and ardent zeal in the glorious, sacred cause of Truth and Liberty ; what may not be expected from the leisure and opportunity retirement will afford you ; for employing those powers with which the great Author of the human frame has endowed you, in the defence of all that can be dear to rational Beings ? When pure Christianity is so violently assailed on all sides ; and suffers almost equally from the intemperate zeal and blind enthusiasm of her mistaken friends, as from the avowed hostility of her open enemies ; what can be more worthy of Mr. Coleridge, than to enter the lists as a zealous Advocate, for *vital*, and *practical* as well as *pure* religion ? Have not we Unitarians, too much deserved the reproach, of being lukewarm Christians, *neither cold nor hot* ? Disgusted with the folly, and too general hypocrisy, of those who place the whole of religion in a blind faith, a simple exertion of intellect, or in enthusiastic feelings ; have we not passed to the opposite extreme, and been too prone to exclude all those warm and generous affections, which the Almighty has implanted in our frame, as powerful auxiliaries to Virtue ?

If these imperfect hints, should direct your attention to a subject, for the discussion of which it appears to me you are supereminently qualified, I shall have much reason to look back with pleasure upon our short lived correspondence. May we so conduct ourselves here, that our intercourse may be renewed in that future glorious and happy State ; where all the worthy and the good shall associate together for ever ! I remain in the sacred bonds of Christian love and fellowship, Dear Sir

Your faithful friend

J. Wood."

(From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.)

My filial love to your dear Mother, and believe me, my best dear friend !

ever, ever most affectionately your's

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. My love to Ward, the Corypheus of Transcribers and Reviewers !! and when the Evil times come I will use my Interest to save him from the Proscribers. That joke is like the last drop of greasy water wrung out of an afternoon dish-clout—it came with difficulty and might as well have stayed behind.

LETTER 56

To JOHN THELWALL.

[Original letter, Pierpont Morgan Library]

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 1798.

MY DEAR THELWALL

Two days after I received your letter—that to which you allude in your last—I returned you an answer, directed J. Thelwall, Derby. In it I informed you of Dr. Beddoes' answer to me—"how he had applied to those, whom he had entertained hopes from, without success ; but was ready to contribute his own quota—and that I wrote back to Dr. B. that I believed you would probably accomplish your plan by the assistance of your friends ; but that if you had occasion for his *individual* assistance I would inform him as soon as I heard from you." And I did not hear from you, and it appears, that you did not receive my letter ; for which I am sorry, but I have lately had a letter from me to Mr. Wedgewood intercepted, and I suspect the *country* post masters grievously.

My Wife and Baby are well—and I shall probably kiss my *youngest* boy in April. As to myself, I received an invitation from Shrewsbury to be the Unitarian Minister, and at the same time an order for 100*£* from Thomas and Josiah Wedgewood. I accepted the former, and returned the latter in a long letter explanatory of my motives—and went off to Shrewsbury, where they were on the point of electing me

unanimously and with unusual marks of affection, when I received an offer from T. and J. Wedgewood, of an annuity of 150*£* to be legally settled on me. Astonished, agitated, and feeling as I could not help feeling, I accepted the offer—in the same worthy spirit, I hope, in which it was made. And this morning I have returned from Shrewsbury, and am now writing in Cottle's Shop. I received your letter this morning, and have lost no time in answering it. I shall be at Stowey in a few days; from whence I write to you of my plans etc.—and likewise concerning you. Unhusbandize your lips, and give the kiss of *fraternal* love to Stella, for me—I am hurried off—and can only say that I think of you often, and never without affectionate esteem—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 57

To JOSEPH COTTLE.

[Original letter, Jesus College, Cambridge. Published in part, *Early Recollections*, i. 307-309.]

February 18, 1798.

MY DEAR COTTLE

I have finished my ballad¹—it is 340 lines. I am going on with the Visions—all together (for I shall print two scenes of my Tragedy, as fragments) I can add 1500 lines—Now what do you advise? Shall I add my Tragedy and so make a second volume? or pursue my first intention of inserting the 1500 in the 3rd Edition? If you should advise a second volume, should you wish—i.e. find it convenient—to be the purchaser? I ask this question, because I wish you to know the true state of my present circumstances. I have received nothing yet from the Wedgewoods and my money is utterly expended. A friend of mine wanted 5 guineas for a little while, which I borrowed of Poole as for myself, and do not therefore like to apply to him. Mr. Estlin has some little money, I believe, in his hands; but I received from him before I went to Shrewsbury 15*£*—and I believe that this was an *anticipation* of the 5 guinea presents which

¹ Possibly referring to *Christabel*, Part I, which runs to 331 lines.

my friends would have made me, in March. But (this affair of the Mr. Wedgewoods turning out) the money in Mr Estlin's hand must go towards repaying him that sum which he suffered me to anticipate—Meantime I owe Biggs 5*£* which lies heavy on my thoughts, and Mrs. Fricker has not been payed her last quarter which lies still heavier. As to myself, I can contrive to go on here, but this 10*£* I must pay some how, that is, 5*£* to Biggs, and 5*£* to Mrs. Fricker. This week I purpose to offer myself to the Bridgewater congregation as assistant minister—without any salary, directly or indirectly. But say not a word of this to anyone, unless you see Mr. Estlin. I pray you, if you have not 5*£* conveniently to spare, call on Mr. Estlin to get it in my name as *borrowed*, and transmit it to Mrs. Fricker—for that must be payed.

God love you,
and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 58

To MR. WICKSTEED, *Wem near Shrewsbury.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

March 9, 1798.

I will relate to you, Sir, with simplicity all of my conversation respecting Mr. Arthur Aikin,¹ which I can recollect—You may, I think, rely on the *substance*; but I do not pledge myself for the identical words. Indeed, when I hear a man pretending to minute accuracy in the retailing of conversations I am in the habit of suspecting that he is deceiving himself. I at least, who at Shrewsbury talked much on many subjects, should find it impossible; especially as the circumstance on which you have written made no very deep impression on my mind. I was supping at Mr. Hart's: to the best of my present recollection I did not then know that Mr. Arthur Aikin had ever been a minister in any place, still less of his particular connection with the Town of

¹ Arthur Aikin (1773-1854) was a brother of Mrs. Barbauld and a writer on scientific subjects. He was trained for the Unitarian ministry, but apparently never took a pulpit.

Shrewsbury. Someone I forget who asked me, what I thought of Mr. Arthur Aikin? I answered, that I had never seen either him or any of his works; but that from what I had heard from a literary Man in London I concluded that he was a booby—a booby I think I said—if not that it was some phrase equally indefensible. By the warmth which I had excited I perceived gradually the morass into which I had been walking; and retraced my steps as well as I could. But “as well as we can” is you know awkward enough on such occasions; and this awkwardness and confusion are too light a punishment for the folly and presumption which places us there. A few minutes after, a Lady present spoke of a friend of mine, Mr. Estlin, with considerable asperity, upon almost as slight grounds as I had before spoken of Mr. Arthur Aikin. I defended my friend: and then animadverting on my own rashness with sufficient severity concluded by moralizing on the silliness and cruelty of pronouncing harsh opinions of men with whom we are slightly or not at all acquainted: the next morning, or the morning after, I met the younger Miss Hart; and again apologized to her for my words, and my apology consisted wholly in self-condemnation. This is all I remember: but whatever I said, I must have said *professedly* from hearsay—and as to badness of heart or moral character in any way, I never spoke or even thought of it. However, whatever else I said, “*si quid dixissem contra spiritum caritatis universae, id indictum volo.*” I had received a letter from a friend in London in which he wrote—“George Dyer is going into Scotland with that booby, Arthur Aikin”—and another acquaintance once told me, that he had met young Aikin occasionally at Edinburgh; that he was “a sullen cold blooded fellow; but very acute”—These were the only ideas that I could in any way have connected with his name; and I accuse myself of an obtuseness in my moral associations in not making his relationship to that great and excellent woman Mrs. *Barbauld* counteract the unkindly feeling, which the foolish and contradictory tittle-tattle of my two acquaintances had produced in my mind to his disfavor. But regret is a waste of our

faculties—from the past experiences we constitute the present moral existence.

Pardon me if I read without believing your account of the infra-human folly of “ numbers of the good people of Shrewsbury ” in their feelings of admiration towards me—It must have been exaggerated to you by a glass that has magnified to monstrosity. I am sure that I discovered enough good sense in them with whom I conversed, and who alone could retail my conversation, to justify me in pronouncing it impossible. But if the fact should ever approximate to your statement of it, I assure you it would be neither “ amusing ” to me or “ ludicrous ”—The errors of my fellow-creatures ordinarily incline me to reflectiveness ; or if my meditations be imbued with any passion it is with that of sorrow—it would be especially so with reference to persons, whom my good wishes and grateful thoughts will always follow, wherever I may be.

You have written Sir ! with warmth, and I am neither surprised nor offended by it ; no nor by the imperious tone, to which the supposed injury your friend had received from my rashness seems to entitle you, and which you have accordingly assumed. But ordinarily it is a great waste of time, intellect, and feeling to be hunting old conversations about characters any way known—we had better be discussing the opinions which have made such characters known. Among whom, but the very foolish, can a Man’s character be injured by a vague assertion or an unproved story ? and to be injured among the foolish is, for ought I know, an advantage, it preserves you from their *praise*. Besides the nature of the human memory is such that no man can at all times accurately keep distinct two sentences, spoken near about the same time, even tho’ they should have had different references or distinguish himself between what he said and when at the same time he said it, he had *in his thoughts* to say likewise or, but I should exhaust a much larger space of paper than remains to me and your patience to boot, if I went on to enumerate the various causes of that very evident fact, that the persons of veracity, who endeavour

to repeat a conversation, will each repeat it a different way. People in general are not sufficiently aware how often the imagination creeps in and counterfeits the memory—perhaps to a certain degree it does always blend with our supposed recollections—you will excuse those desultory remarks or attribute them to my old vice of preaching, although preaching is *not* my trade or “reverend” a prefix to my name which I voluntarily admit. I have answered your letter by the return of post.

Farewell

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S.

On looking for your address I perceive it is Wem—I have therefore opened my letter to beg that you will tell young Mr. Hazlitt that I remember him with respect due to his talent, and that the wish which I expressed of seeing him at Stowey still lives within me.

LETTER 59

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday, May 14, 1798.

MY DEAR BROTHER

By an odd jumble of accidents I did not receive the parcel till within a few days. My wife was this morning delivered of a very fine boy.¹ She had a remarkably good time, and both she and the child are as well as can be. May God be praised! Believe me I am truly anxious to hear concerning your little one; my little Hartley has had an ugly cough and feverish complaint, which made me fear for the whooping cough, but it was only the effect of teething, at least so we hope. Yesterday I walked into Taunton to perform the divine services for poor Dr. Toulmin, whose daughter in a melancholy derangement suffered herself to be swallowed up by the tide on the coast between Sidmouth

¹ Berkeley Coleridge (named after Bishop Berkeley, 1685-1753) who died a year later, while Coleridge was in Germany.

and Bere. Good old man ! He bears it like one in whom Christianity is an habit of feeling in a still greater degree, than a conviction of the understanding. He sanctifies his calamity but it is plain that it has cut deep into his heart. And, then, from a Mrs. Stowe I heard all at once the death of Mr. William Lewis ; remembering the man and remembering the conversation we had concerning him, in the churchyard walk, and considering, as it were in a glance of the imagination his bulk of stature, and then the horrid manner of his death—it so overpowered me that I felt as if I had been choked, and then burst into an agony of tears. I scarcely remember ever to have been so deeply affected.

I will write again in a few days and send you the Tragedy etc., etc. Sheridan has again promised to fit it for the stage and bring it on, which promise he will as certainly break, as I am your affectionate and

grateful brother

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Present my Duty to my Mother and my Wife's duty. My kindest love to Mrs. G. Coleridge, and a dear kiss for the little one. Mrs. S. Coleridge's thanks and love to her and Mrs. J. Coleridge. My kind love to Edward and the Major, and the Major's Quintetto.¹ God bless their beautiful faces. I have written a Poem ² lately which I think even the Major (who is no admirer of the art) would like.

Pray let me hear from you ; what am I to send besides the Tragedy and the Historical Grammar ? There is something else and I have forgotten it.

¹ James Coleridge was appointed Major-Commandant of Volunteers in 1797. The Quintetto were James, John Taylor, Bernard, Francis George, and Frances.

² "The Poem as I suppose *Christabel*." E. H. Coleridge.

LETTER 60

To THOMAS POOLE, *Stowey near Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum.]

August 3, 1798.

MY DEAREST POOLE

I arrived safely, etc. With regard to Germany,¹ these are my intentions, if not contravened by superior arguments. I still think the realization of the scheme of high importance to my intellectual utility ; and of course to my moral happiness. But if I go with Mrs. C. and little ones, I must *borrow*—an imprudent, perhaps an immoral thing—and the uncertainties attendant on all human schemes ; the uncertainty of our happiness, comfort, cheap living etc., when in Germany ; and the unsettled state of Germany itself ; force on me the truth that I ought not to hazard any considerable sum. I propose therefore, if, as I guess, Mrs. Coleridge's wishes tend the same way, to go myself (comparatively a trifling expense) stay 3 or 4 months, in which time I shall at least have learnt the language ; then, if all is well, all comfortable, and I can rationally propose to myself a scheme of weighty advantages—to fetch over my family—if not to return, with my German for my pains, and the wisdom that 3 or 4 months sojourn among a new people must give to a watchful and thinking man. Make up your mind on my scheme—I shall return in a week. All, whom I have seen, are well. Wordsworth and his Sister, Wade and Cottle, desire their best love to you— I shall dart into Wales, and return per viam Swansea usque ad Bridgewater sive Cum-mage—about a week from the date hereof.

God bless you and your ever
affectionate and grateful

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ On September 14, 1798, Coleridge and Dorothy and William Wordsworth left London for Yarmouth and Germany. (The sea voyage is described by Coleridge in *Satyrane's Letters* ; see *Biographia Literaria*.) On the first of October, Coleridge left the Wordsworths, going on alone to Ratzeburg. Here he acquired a sufficient knowledge of German to enable him to understand the language ; and on February 6, 1799, he left for Göttingen, where he matriculated and attended lectures at the University. After varied experiences he left for England on June 24, 1799.

Wordsworth has not forgotten his promise about his Tragedy.¹ I have been very anxious about poor Cruikshanks—doubtful, very doubtful about the bottom of his affairs! May his better Genius protect him!

LETTER 61

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Somersetshire, England.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published, *New Monthly Magazine*, part iii. vol. xlv. October, 1835. In the same publication are two letters to Mrs. Coleridge and the three letters form the basis of Coleridge's narrative *Over the Brocken*. See the *Amulet*, 1829, 130-141; and *Miscellanies, Aesthetic and Literary*, 1885, 187-197. Coleridge's tour over the Brocken was made in the company of five Englishmen, the two Parrys, John Chester, Clement Carlyon (1777-1864) a physician, and George Bellas Greenough (1778-1855) the scientist and geologist, and a German, Professor Blumenbach's son. A full account of the journey is given in *Early Years and Late Reflections*, Clement Carlyon, 1856-1858. Professor Edith J. Morley recently uncovered Greenough's diary and letters, and gives an account of the journey in *Coleridge in Germany* (1799), the *London Mercury*, April 1931, 554-565. Although Professor Morley has been particularly active in my behalf, Coleridge's letters to Greenough, from which she quotes, have not yet been made available to me, as the present owner of the letters has not released them for complete publication.]

Sunday Morning, ½ past 8, May 19,² 1799.

MY DEAREST POOLE

I arrived at Göttingen last night, 9 o'clock, after a walk of thirty miles—somewhat disappointed at finding no letter for *me*, but *surprised* that Chester had none. Surely, his family do not behave over-attentively towards him! We have been about 8 months and 10 days; and he has received *one* letter from them. Well, now to conclude my all too uninteresting Journal. In my second letter to Sara I was still at Blankenburg—We left it on Wednesday Morning, May 15th, taking first one survey more of the noble view which it commanded—I stood on the Castle Hill, on my right a Hill half-wood, half-rock, of a most grand outline (the rude sketch of it's outline is given in that little drawing at the top of my first letter to Sara) then a plain of young corn—then Rocks—walls and towers, and pinnacles of Rock, a proud domain Disdainful of the Seasons! these formed the right hand.

¹ The *Borderers*.

² May 19, 1799, was on Saturday.

On the left and curving round till they formed the front view, Hills here green with leafy trees, here still iron-brown, dappled as it were with coming spring and lingering Winter ; not (like the single Hill) of abrupt and grand outlines, but rising and sinking yet on the whole still rising, in a *frolic Surginess*. In the Plain (or area of the view) young corn, herds of cattle, troops of goats, and shepherds at the head of *Streams* of Sheep—We left the town, proceeded thro' this plain, and having walked about half a mile, turned to contemplate the backward view, to which was now added the Towers and castle of Bermburg, that looked in upon us from the distance, on our right hand as we *then* stood. We proceeded ; and a mile from Blankenburg we came to a small lake quite surrounded with Beech-trees, the margins of the lake solid marble Rock—Two or three stone-thrushes were flitting about those rocky margins. Our road itself was, for a few strides, occupied by a pretty little one arched Bridge, under which the lake emptied itself, and at the distance of ten yards from the bridge, on our right hand, plunged itself down, (it's stream only once broken by a jutting rock nearly in the midst of the fall) into a chasm of 30 feet in depth and somewhat more in length (a chasm of black or mossy Rocks) and then ran under ground. We now entered the Woods. The morning thick and misty—we saw a number of wild deer, and at least fifty Salamanders. The Salamander is a beautiful lizard perfectly harmless (I examined several in my naked hand)—it's length from six to seven Inches, with a nightingale's eye, and just 22 yellow streaks on it's glossy-black skin. That it can live in the Fire, is a fable, but it is true, that if put on burning coals, for the first, or even for the second time, it emits a liquid so copiously as to extinguish the coals. So we went, up hill and down dale, but all this woods, for four miles, when we came to a sort of Heath, stubby with [a] few trunks of old fir-trees, and here were women in various groups sowing the Fir-seed : a few ceasing from their work to look at us. Never did I behold aught so impressively picturesque, or rather statue-esque, as these Groups of women in all their various attitudes—the thick

mist, thro' which their figures came to my eye, gave such a soft *Unreality* to them ! these lines, my dear Poole, I have written rather for my own pleasure than your's—for it is impossible that this misery of words can give to you, that which it may yet perhaps be able to recollect to me. What can be the cause that I am so miserable a describer ? Is it that I understand neither the practice nor the principles of Painting ? or is it not true, that others have really succeeded ? I could half suspect that what are deemed fine descriptions, produce their effects almost purely by a charm of words, with which and with whose combinations, we associate *feelings* indeed, but no distinct *Images*. (From these women we discovered that we had gone out of our way previously 4 miles, so we laughed, and trudged back again, and contrived to arrive at Wernigerode about 12 o'clock—this belongs to the Princely Count Stolberg a cousin of the two Brothers, the Princely Counts Stolberg of Stolberg, who both of them were Poets and Christians, good Poets, real Christians, and most kind-hearted Princes ! What a combination of vanities for Germany !

The Prince—Count Stolberg at Wernigerode gave on this day a feast to his People—and almost all the family of the Stolbergs were assembled—the nobles and people were shooting for a prize at a stuffed Bird placed on the Top of a high May-pole. A nobleman of the family, who had been lately at Göttingen, recognized Parry, and was about to have introduced us, but neither our dress or time permitting it, we declined the honour. In this little town there is a school with about 12 or 13 poor scholars in it, who are maintained by the Tenants and citizens—they breakfast with one, dine with another, and sup with a third, managing their visits so as to divide the Burthen of their maintenance according to the capabilities of the people, to whose tables they solicit admission. Thro' a country, not sufficiently particularized to be worth describing we came to Drübeck, a pretty village—far off on the right hand a semicircular vale of an immense extent : close by on the left, it's figure the concave of a Crescent, a high woody hill, the heights cloathed with firs

with an intermixture of Beeches yellow-green in their opening Foliage, but below these and flowing adown the Hill into the Valley, a noble Stream of Beeches, in freshest verdure. We enter[ed] the wood, passed woods and woods, every now and then coming to little spots of greenery of various sizes and shapes, but always Walled by trees ; and always as we entered, the first object which met us was a Mount of wild outline, black with firs soaring huge above the woods. One of these greeneries was in shape a parallelogram, walled on three sides by the silver-barked weeping Birches, on the fourth by conical Firs—a rock on the Fir-side rose above the Trees. Just within the wood, and before us ten huge Fir-mounts—it was a most impressive Scene ! Perhaps not the less so from the mistiness of the wet air—We travelled on and on, on what a weary way ! now up, now down, now with path, now without it, having no other guides than a map, a compass, and the foot-paces of the Pigs, which had been the day before driven from Harzburg to Drübeck, where there had been a Pig-Fair ! This intelligence was of more service to us than map or compass. At length we came to the foot of the huge Fir-mount roaring with woods, and winds, and waters ! And now the Sky cleared up, and masses of crimson light fell around us from the fiery west, and from the clouds over our heads that *reflected* the western fires. We, wound along by the foot of the mount, and left it behind us, close before us a high hill, a hill, close on our right, and close on our left a hill—we were in a circular prison of Hills, and many a mass of light, moving and stationary, gave life and wildness to these Rocks and Woods that rose out of them. But now we emerged into a new scene ! close by our left hand was a little Hamlet, each House with it's orchard of Blossom-trees, in a very small and very narrow coomb. The Houses were built on the lowest part of the Slope of the steeply-shelving Hills, that formed the coomb ; but on our right hand was a huge Valley with rocks in the distance and a steady mass of clouds that afforded no mean substitute for a Sea ! On each side, as ever high woody Hills—but majestic River, or huge Lake—O that was wanting, here and

every where. And now we arrived at Harzburg !—Hills ever by our sides, in all conceivable variety of forms and garniture—It were idle in me to attempt by words to give their projections and their retirings and now they were now in cones, now in roundness, now in tongue like lengths, now pyramidal, now a huge Bow, and all at every step varying the forms of their outlines ; or how they now stood abreast, now ran aslant, now rose up behind each other, or now, as at Harzburg, presented almost a Sea of huge motionless waves, too multiform for Painting, too multiform even for the Imagination to remember them—yea, my very sight seems incapacitated by the novelty and complexity of the Scene. Ye red lights from the Rain Clouds ! Ye gave the whole the last magic Touch ! I had now walked five and thirty miles over roughest roads, and had been sinking with fatigue ; but so strong was the stimulus of this scene, that my frame seemed to have drank in a new vitality ; and I now walked on to Goslar almost as if I had risen from healthy sleep on a fine spring morning ! so light and lively were my faculties. On our road to Goslar we passed by several Smelting Houses and Wire Manufactories and one particularly noticeable where they separate the Sulphur from the Ores. The night was now upon us, and the white and blue flares from this Building formed a grand and beautiful object. So white was the flame, that in the manufactory itself All appeared quite like a natural Day light. (It is strange, that we do not adopt some means to render our artificial lights, more white.) As the clock struck ten we entered the silent city of Goslar, and thro' some few narrow Passages, called Streets by Courtesy, arrived at our Inn—my companion scarcely able to speak—too tired even to be glad that the Journey was over, a journey of 40 miles, including the way which we lost. On Thursday, May 16th, we saw the Vitriol manufactory, and the Dome Church at Goslar. The latter is a real University—it is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in Germany. The first thing that strikes you on entering it is a picture of St. Christopher wading thro' the River with Jesus Christ (or a boy with a globe in his hand) on his shoulders—this is uni-

versal in all the Churches that I have seen ; but noticeable here for the *enormous* size of the Picture ! and for the conceit of putting in the hand of the Giant Saint a fir tree “ with which the mast of some tall ammiral hewn on Norwegian Hills, were but a wand,” and giving this high fir Tree a crack in the middle, the face of the holy Giant with a horrid Grin of Toil and effort corresponding with the said crack in proof of the huge weight of the disguised Deity. The next was an altar of the God Croto—the only assured antiquity of German Heathenism—On this altar human sacrifices were offered—it is of metal, brass I believe, with diamond holes all around it, and supported by four grotesque animals—then two stone-baboons with monks’ cowls on them, grinning at each other—said to have been likewise the work of the savage Pagans, when the monks first preached Christianity in Germany ; then an altar-piece by the celebrated Lucas Cranack in which the faces of the Apostles are marvellously ugly but lively and natural. It is an admirable painting. Then tombs and thrones of Emperors and Queens and Princes (for Goslar was formerly the seat of the Saxon Emperors of Germany) the hole where the Devil entered, and how he set two Bishops by the ears and how when they fought in this church and how one killed the other—a huge crown of Bell-metal 7 strides in Diameter given by the Victor Bishop for Penance. Also relievo of the monk who had poisoned the Emperor in the Lord’s Supper ; and the under petticoat of leather which the Devil took from the woman who rose from her bed at midnight, supposing it to be matin hour, entered the church, began praying, and wondered rather to see the church so full ; when all at once she heard the clock strike 12, cried aloud “ God and Christ—Rausch! rausch! rausch! [raus ?]—All nothing but Ghosts ”—off fled the woman, but as she ran over the threshold, she tripped, fell down, and ere she could get up again, the Devil had pulled off her petticoat. I was much interested by this ruinous old church—half Lutheran, half Catholic—the occasion of which I will explain when I am home. We left this ugly silent old desert of a city, and strolled on thro’ hill and dale of

Pines, up which the little mists crept like smoke from cottage chimneys—till we came to Clausthal, a large town with a number of mines around it, one of which all but myself descended. I had before read a most minute description of the said mine ; and from the same concluded that I should see nothing new after what I had seen at Stowey, and from Chester's account my conclusion was perfectly right so I stayed at home and wrote two letters to Sara—I saw the whole process of minting, for all the Hanoverian money is here minted and other little curiosities which I have ever found hideously stupid.¹ We were such a hospital of bruised Toes, swelled ankles, blistered soles, and excoriated Heels, that we stayed in this town till Saturday Morning, May 18th. We passed up and down over little Hills thro' a pine-covered country, still looking down into deep and wild coombs of Pine and Fir Trees (I scarcely know the difference between Pine and Fir) till we came to Lehrbech a little village of wood with wooden tiles on the house tops, lying in the bottom of a narrow Coomb, three or four of the Houses scattered upon the slopes of the Hills, that formed the Coomb—the coomb is rich with the Green green beeches ; the Slope of the Hills have Beeches and Firs intermixed ; but the heights are wholly the property of the Firs. From here we proceeded to Osterode, hilly pleasant country, the soil heav'd up and down in hillocks with many a dell and hollow, and the finer trees picturesquely scattered. Osterode is a large and very ugly town, the people looking dirtier and poorer than is common in Germany—Over the town Hall is the Rib of a Giant ; these are common in the inland towns of Germany. They are generally Whale-Ribs—in the dark ages it was of course extremely unusual for any man to leave his plough, as the song goes, to go ploughing the wild seas ; when any did, they were of course ambitious to bring something curious home, as a present to their countrymen, and this is no doubt the origin of these whale-ribs. From Osterode we proceeded to Catlenburg. Mem. the view of

¹ This sentence has been mutilated by the seal, and several words are conjectured.

the almshouse on a woody Hill, part of the wood cleared and within the space occupied by a fine Garden. From hence-forwards the views became quite English, except that in England we have water ever in our views, either sea or lake or river—and we have elmy hedges—and single cottages—and gentlemen's seats—and many a house, the dwelling of Knowledge and Virtue, between the cottages and the Gentleman's seat ! Our fields and meadows too are so green, that it is common for novelists and describers here to say when they praise a prospect " It had a British Greenness." All this and more is wanting in Germany ; but their woods are far finer, and their hills more diversified ; and their little villages far more interesting, every House being separate with it's little garden and orchard. This answers to my notion of human nature ; which distinguishes itself equally from the Tyger and the Sheep—and is neither solitary nor gregarious, but *neighborly*. Add to this too, that the extreme misery and the earth and heaven-alarming wickedness and profanity of our English Villages is a thing wholly unknown in Germany. The women too, who are working in the fields, always behave respectably, modestly, and with courtesy—Well—I must hasten on to Göttingen ; we proceeded—but I ought to say that in the churchyard at Catlenburg I was pleased with the following Epitaph.

"JOHANN REINBOLD OF CATLENBURG.

Ach ! sie haben	Ah ! they have
Einen braven	Put a brave
Man begraben :	Man in Grave !
Vielen war er mehr.	He was more than many !"

This is word for word.

About a mile and a half from Catlenburg we came to a lovely scene, hillocks, and scattered oaks, and Beeches, a sweet tho' very small lake, a green meadow, and one white cottage, and this spot exactly so fitted was completely encircled, by the grandest swell of woods, that I ever beheld—the hills were clothed as with grass, so rich was the verdure. So complete was the circle that as I stood and looked around me, in what part the wood opened to admit our road—we entered the

wood, and walked for two miles under a complete Bower, and as we emerged from it—I shall never forget that glorious Prospect. Behind me the Harz Mountains with the snow-spots shining on them ; close around us woods upon little Hills, little Hills of an hundred Shapes, a dance of Hills, whose variety of position supplied the effect of, and almost imitated, *motion*—two higher than the rest of a conical form were bare and strong ; the rest were all hid with Leafage (I cannot say, trees) for the Foliage concealed the Boughs that sustained—And all these hills in all their forms and bearings, which it were such a chaos to describe, were yet all in so pure a harmony !—before us green corn fields that filled the plain and crept up the opposite Hills in the far off distance, and closing our view in the angle at the left that high, woody Hill, on which stands the Monarch Ruin of the Hesse, and close by me in a deep dell was a sweet neighborhood of houses with their orchards in blossom. O wherefore was there no water ! We were now only 7 miles from Göttingen—I shall write one letter more from Germany and in that letter I will conclude my Tour, with some minuteness, as it will give you at the same time the account of the Country near Göttingen. I hope to leave this place in about a fortnight ; but Sara must not be uneasy, if I should be home a week later than she expects—it may be a week earlier—but as I pass thro’ Brunswick, Wolfenbüttel, etc., I may perhaps have opportunities of acquiring information concerning Lessing which it were criminal to neglect ¹—but I pine, languish, and waste away—to be at home, for tho’ in England only I have those men that hate me, yet men only have I there whom I love !

God bless my Friend !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Coleridge’s plan to write the life of Lessing was abortive.

LETTER 62

To JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, *Stoke House near Cobham, Surrey, England.*

[Original letter, Library of Owen D. Young.

This was one of the "six huge letters" which Coleridge writing to Josiah Wedgwood on May 21, 1799, says he had written but had not sent by post, fearing that they would be lost. Litchfield "is half inclined to wonder whether [these letters] . . . ever had any objective existence"; but this letter shows that one at least had been written. *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. B. Litchfield, 1903, 68-72.]

[1799.]

It is difficult to give a definite idea of the word *Bauer* without running thro' the origin and history of this Class. Under the Roman Empire there existed nothing analogous to it. The free citizens were either independent Proprietors of Land, or lived in towns and Cities—the agricultural labor was performed by Slaves, as in the West India Islands. Gibbon calculates the number of the Subjects of the first Emperor at 120 millions, of which he computes one half to have been Slaves. These seem to have been treated more humanly under the Emperors, than during the Republic. Of this I have been able to conceive two causes—first, The Roman Empire had grown so large that it became the Policy of the Emperors to make no further conquests—and the *Peace* of the whole civilized World, the consequence of this Policy, operated in the same manner on the Roman Houses, as an actual abolition of the African Trade would operate on the West India Slavery. It stopped up the source : and made the masters from the advanced Price of the Slaves etc., more attentive to their well-being and in a generation or two they became to a certain degree naturalized in the countries where they laboured and the idea *Enemy* ceased to associate itself with that of Slave. Secondly, the Roman Empire was too large, and too incongruous in it's parts, for that *national* Religion, which built on national Events and working on the imagination thro' definite forms and on the feelings thro' incessant association of the mythology with the Laws and Scenes, which were *exclusively* theirs, had effected wonders on the Greeks and early Romans ! for this it was grown too

large. It gradually therefore suffered the National Religion to sink into contempt, and took up a World-Religion—such as had always existed in Asia, from the largeness of the Asiatic Empires. To this cause I am inclined to attribute the easy Propagation of Christianity—which was in truth the World-Religion common to the great Empires in Asia, divested of Asiatic forms and ceremonies. The consequence of Christianity or a World-Religion as opposed to a *National* Religion appears to me universally this—Personal and Domestic Duties are far better attended to, but Patriotism and all Enthusiasm for the aggrandisement of a country as a country, are weakened or extinguished. In Greece and Rome on the contrary, under the influence of a *national* Religion, we find sorry Fathers, bad Husbands, and cruel Masters : but glowing and generous Patriots. In Christian Countries an excellent Private Character totally devoid of all public Spirit is the most common of Characters. But on this subject a man might write a volume and bring out some curious observations on the March of Things in France ; and how far a Passion for Statues etc., will be able to smuggle a sort of Idolatry into the Feelings altho' it *may be* too late in the World to introduce it into the understanding. The more I think, the more I am convinced that the greatest of differences is produced when in the one case the feelings are worked upon thro' the Imagination and the Imagination thro' definite Forms (i.e. the Religion of Greece and Rome) ; and in the other cases where the Feelings are worked upon by Hopes and Fears purely individual, and the Imagination is kept barren in definite Forms and only in cooperation with the Understanding labours after an obscure and indefinite Vastness—this is Christianity. My dear Friend ! I have made something like a digression—but it is the first, and shall be the last. The influence of the World-Religion operated slowly on the Roman Character, but it did operate and produce finally laws and regulations in favor of the Slaves, still Slavery continued. But soon after the Northern Nations had shattered the Roman Empire, Slavery began to transmute itself into Vassalage—a state of Dependence more

suited to a wild people who had not yet learnt to be luxurious, and on whom the doctrines of the Christian Priests worked with greater effect while according to the Testimony of Tacitus the Slaves in the German Nations were properly speaking, Vassals—*i.e.* the Master gave the Servant House and Land, and received in return a given share of the Produce, retaining however an arbitrary power of dispossession etc. N.B. I fear this, whenever I use the word Vassals. At first the Norther Nations adopted absolute Slavery, which they had learnt from the Romans but soon they formed part of their Slaves into Vassals, and in the year 1200 *Slavery* was wholly abolished throughout Germany and Italy, and in 1300 or somewhat earlier throughout France and Spain. In England Vassalage instead of Slavery appears to have been general, still earlier, than in Italy or Germany.

It appears however that the *German Conquerors* did by no means either make Slaves or Vassals of the Nations which they conquered—the *Sclavonia* Nations, who conquered Poland and Russia, did. And it is probable that the huge Body of Polish Nobles (the only free men in the country) are the descendants of the conquering Army and the Wretches who form the Polish Peasantry, the conquered People. It remains therefore difficult to account for the amazing Proportion of Vassals in France and Spain, countries conquered by the *German Tribes* ; and still more for the still greater Number of Vassals in Germany which had never been conquered. It is evident from this that altho' Vassalage originated in Slavery, yet in the middle ages the Vassals were not the descendants of Slaves. I find in the History of Hungary by Palmer a distinct account of the introduction of Vassalage in that country—and I believe that Hungary is the only Country in which it was even distinctly and suddenly introduced. Hungary had been conquered in 884 by an Asiatic Tribe, amounting to 20000 men. The smallness of their number made these conquerors adopt in haste the mildness of the German Tribes—to the conquered nation they left untouched their personal Freedom, and permitted them the possession of their Estates, on the condition of receiving

$\frac{1}{9}$ of the yearly Profits. This the 20,000 divided among themselves and the descendants of these 20,000 are the present Hungarian Nobility ; at least, with such mixtures as 900 years necessarily bring along with them—In this state things continued till 1514, when Pope Leo X commissioned the Cardinal Thomas Baxato to preach up a crusade against the Turks. 80,000 Hungarians assembled themselves under the holy banner, and being in distress for provisions, they plundered the cities, Ofen and Pesth and irritated by the execution of some of the Ringleaders, they elected a George Dofa for King—and declared war against the Nobles ; but they were completely routed, and the King Bladislaus and the Senate of Nobles hereupon declared all the Country People of Hungary for Vassals—leaving them no power of *alienating* their property and laying them under heavy Services and Taxes—in short, they declared the whole of their Possessions to be the *Estates* of the Nobles, and the original Proprietors as parts of the Estate and transferable with the same. This accounts for the state of Vassalage in Hungary ; but in France, Spain, Germany, and Italy we find no such events on record ; and it is a certain fact, that the original German Conquerors did not introduce Vassalage. In Spain and in many parts of Italy they admitted the conquered people to fully equal Rights with themselves—and *in France* altho' they reserved to themselves political superiority, yet the laws of property they left unaltered. They took from the natives nearly one third of the Lands ; but these they possessed in the same manner as the natives possessed the remaining two thirds. Yet in Spain, Italy, France, and the unconquered Germany throughout the middle ages we find the most oppressive Vassalage universal. We must attribute this phaenomenon therefore to 1 the constant civil wars, in which Vassalage was uniformly the lot of all Prisoners, to whom was immediately allotted house and Land and they were obliged to cultivate the same for the advantage of the conquerors. 2ndly to the introduction of feudal Tenures. At first the Chief allotted or *lent* out his *peculiar* Domains on easy conditions. The Possessors of these feudal Tenures

were constantly favoured at the expense of their fellow-subjects—hence many voluntarily subjected themselves and properties—these again by means of the civil wars and the horrid abuses of the courts of Justice obtained secondary Vassals—and in this state of things we find the origin of the Aristocracy of the Nobles. The great and favoured Vassals formed the Nobles—and accordingly as they made themselves independent of the Crown, as in England and great part of Germany, or were retained or brought back again, under the power of the same, as in France, so arose either *mixed* or absolute Monarchy. The secondary Vassals are the Bauers. *3rdly* to the absence of Commerce and Manufactures— In purely agricultural states, in which from any cause Vassalage had taken root, the number of Vassals must constantly increase. For unpropertied persons could in such states, find no other means of subsistence than by voluntarily subjecting themselves—for accustomed to Vassals the great Proprietors would form no ideal of Farmers, or Hired Servants. But the number of unpropertied Persons must necessarily increase in every agricultural State, where in order to keep estates in the family the rights of . . . ¹ will be always established. In Germany, the Laws compelled every unpropertied man to arrange himself as Vassal under some Proprietor—who became answerable for him etc.—*4thly* to Superstition—the influence of the Clergy. It was generally believed that the Vassals of the Church had a better chance of heaven—and it is pretty certain, that upon earth at least, they were better used and less liable to the devastations of War. It is said, that at the moment of the French Revolution there existed in France a million and a half—Vassals on the lands belonging to the Clergy.

It appears then, that soon after the Irruption of the Northern Nations Slavery changed into Vassalage; but the number of Vassals became far greater than that of Slaves had been. At first, at least in the case of those who had been made Vassals thro' Conquest or Civil War, the Lord gave house and land indeed, and was payed by a share of the

¹MS. blurred, word illegible.

Produce (a far less horrid state than that of Slaves on Roman or West India Plantations)—but he retained a power of possession over the person of the Vassal, and could dispose of him to other estates. (This is still the case in many of the Russian Dominions.) This however had been always regarded as tyranny, and from the year 983 the Clergy, following the example of the Bishop of Constanx, struggled to introduce the *glebae adscriptio*—by which the Vassal or Bondman was rendered inseparable from his Family and from the estate. This is the first alleviation of the Vassalage of the Peasants. About the same time, the Princes and Nobles who prided themselves in keeping open tables for a large retinue, found the old method of receiving from their Vassals shares of the natural Produce inconvenient and precarious—they gave therefore to these Vassals certain pieces of Land which should be wholly theirs—and instead of rent exacted *Services*—that is every Vassal with his Cattle and Family worked a given number of days on the Estate of his Lord. This by fixing the idea of a distinct [sic] may be considered as the second alleviation. The third is the *jus ad glebam*, which when combined with the *glebae adscriptio* is still Vassalage ; but Vassalage beginning to border on Freedom. To this some districts of Germany arrived very early in the *middle* ages ; and I believe there are still parts in Mecklenburg where the Vassals have not even yet arrived to it. (The Duke of Mecklenburg, our Queen's Brother, is, by the by, a fine mixture of Fool and Tyrant—and Vassalage is in his dominions more cruel than in any part of Europe, except Russia and Russian Poland.) Of a formal Emancipation of the Vassals thro' Government, History gives not one Example from the year 1247 (when Matilda, wife of Otto, Duke of Brunswick, stated by law a sum of money which being offered, no Vassal in the country of Luneburg could be refused his Freedom) till the reign of Frederic I of Prussia, who formally abolished Vassalage in his Westphalian Dominions. Yet in this interspace it had been insensibly abolishing throughout Germany—so that before the Edict of Fred. I. the number of Vassals was trifling compared to

that of free Peasants. This alteration must be ascribed *1st* to the Crusades, when multitudes were freed on condition of becoming Soldiers—or, more accurately, to make them become voluntary and of course, braver Soldiers—and many bought their Freedom for a trifling Sum of their Lords who took all means of raising money for that expedition. *2—* The Introduction of the Roman Law produced many happy effects on the state of property, and smoothed the way to the Emancipation. *3rd* Still however the state of Vassalage continued frequent and cruel to the beginning of the 16th Century when the Obstinate and bloody Peasants-war contributed still more powerfully to their general Emancipation. *4thly*. To these must be added, and perhaps, as the most powerful cause, the rise of Towns, and Cities, of commerce and Manufactures, which made it in the first place possible and even easy for the Vassals to procure money to buy their Freedom—and secondly, by affording safe places of Refuge to Fugitives, disposed the Lords to sell that Freedom, which if not sold would probably be taken. Traces of Vassalage still exist in Holstein, Lausitz, and Silesia—the latter is curious, as Frederic the Great gave all the Silesian Peasants *jus ad glebam*, and security of Inheritance ; and limited the Ransom-money, (which, being offered, perfect Freedom must be given) at a Ducat ; i.e. 7 Shillings Sterling. In Mecklenburg it is still universal—and in Pommerania, if the present great and good King of Prussia who is deservedly idolized in Germany has not abolished it. If he has not, it may be considered as certain, that he shortly will do it. In the next, I will give the distinct History of the Hanoverian Bauers to the present day—and in a third the account of them, as they are, in agriculture, size of property, education, etc. etc. etc.

Your grateful and affectionate Friend,
S. T. COLERIDGE.

end by thanking you for your letter which under your convictions was a wise and temperate one—

God bless you, and your's !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 64

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Three lines published, *Coleridge and His Son*, E. L. Griggs, *Studies in Philology*, vol. xxvii. No. 4 (Oct. 1930).]

Wednesday Morning,
[Sept. 25, 1799.]

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

We arrived at Stowey last evening—and this morning poor Fanny¹ left us. As neither Sara or I have as yet any symptoms of infection, I hope and trust, that you and Edith and Eliza are safe. Believe me tho' obliged to bear up against the *Fresh* [outburst] of my wife's hypersuperlative Grief on the occasion I have nevertheless suffered much anxiety lest poor Eliza or Mrs. S. should have been colonized by those damn'd invisible skin-moles. Moses received the Catholic sacrament of unction for the first time last night. He was very merry during the performance, singing or chanting, I be a funny Fellow and my name is Brimstonello.² I doubt not that all will be well—well by tomorrow, or at farthest next day—for he slept quiet and has never once scratched himself since his embrimstonement—Have you seen Isaac Wild's Travels—I find them interesting—he makes the Americans appear a most degraded and vile nation—In one of the ecclesiastical Historians I find that the Oak which Abraham planted at Mamre was still existing in the time of Constantine and destroyed by his orders—a famous mart being held there every summer, persons of all Religions, both Jews and Christians and Asiatic Gentiles in a general confluence doing honour thereto. What a delightful subject

¹ Probably a maid.

² Moses was a nickname for little Hartley. He had caught the itch and Coleridge here refers to an oil treatment.

this for an eclogue or pastoral or philosophical poem. William Taylor¹ is the man to write it—his knowledge, his style, his all-half believing doubtingness of all—in short, I wish, that you would hint it to him.

I wish, you would make my respects to Dyer, the Bookseller, and beg to know the *lowest price* at which he will let *me* have *Bacon's Works* and Milton's Prose Works—If he mention the former at not above two guineas, I shall have it—Likewise if he send them, to send his Catalogue and should he have a copy of Taylor's Sermons² by all means to let me have them, (any parcel for me to be addressed Mr. T. Poole, the Old Angel, Bridgewater) (for Mr. Coleridge). The money shall be payed him immediately on my receipt of the Books, by some of my relations in Exeter. Tell him, that if he rides any where near Nether Stowey, I hope, he will not forget my invitation, or consider it as a commonplace compliment.

That Dyer, whom my Brother names a dark-hearted Jacobin, is really an honest man and I like him. The respect to a man of Genius which he payed to you in letting you have the *Manibunos* [?] at your own price pleased me.

This letter is not worth postage (but my Brain is dry, I having been letter writing the whole morning).

Sara's love, she hopes, that if Eliza was gone before Edith received her letter, that Edith has written to caution her of what has happened.

I shall go on with the Mohammed—(tho' something I must do for pecuniary emoluments). I think of writing a schoolbook—Let me hear from you and of your proceedings

Your's affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ William Taylor of Norwich (1765-1836), who was Southey's friend rather than Coleridge's.

² Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667).

LETTER 65

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Fore Street Hill, Exeter.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Three lines published, *Coleridge and His Son, Studies in Philology* (Oct. 1930).]

Monday Evening, Sept. 30, [1799.]

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I am extremely interested with your account of Mr. and Mrs. Keenan. You have of course asked her whether Buonaparte is a man of science—it is the mode and fashion to deny it. Do not forget to procure from old Jackson a copy of poor Bampfylde's¹ Sonnets and Poems—he will at least lend them you to copy out: and let me know what you think of old Jackson. Male and Female Rhymes, are neither more or less than single and double Rhymes—Right, Light are Masculine Rhymes: Ocean, Motion, feminine. At present, they are called Masculine and Feminine, not male and Female— I should think that in *Thalaba*² it would be better on many accounts, if Allah were uniformly substituted for God—the so frequent Repetition of that last word gives somehow or other a sermonic cast to a Poem, and perhaps too it might give a not altogether unfounded offence, that a name so connected with awful realities, is (so often and so solemnly) blended with those bold Fictions which ask and gain only a transient Faith. But I object now only from Recollection.

Our little Hovel is almost afloat—poor Sara tired off her legs with servantry—the young one fretful and noisy from confinement exerts his activities on all forbidden things—the house stinks of sulphur. I however sunk in Spinoza, remain as undisturbed as a Toad in a Rock; that is to say, when my rheumatic pains are asleep, for you must know that our apothecary persuaded me and Sara to wear Mercurial Girdles, as Preventives, accordingly Sara arrayed herself with

¹ J. C. W. Bampfylde, who published *Sixteen Sonnets* in 1778; four of the sonnets were republished by Southey in *Specimens of the Later English Poets*, 1808, iii. 434.

² *Thalaba* was published in 1801.

this Cest of the Caledonian Venus and Seke [Psyche?]. On the first day I walked myself into a perspiration, and O Christ Jesus ! how I stunk ! Convinced as I was before of the necessity of all parts of the human body, I now received double-damning nose-conviction, that all my pores were necessary *Holes* with a vengeance. I walked one *Magnum Mercuri Excrementum*, cursed with the faculty of self-sentieny—but the Nose is the most placable of all the senses, and to one's own evil odours one can reconcile oneself almost as easily as to one's own Vices. But whether I caught cold or no, I cannot tell ; but the next day a fit of the Rheumatism laid hold of me from the small of my back down to the calves of my Legs, shooting thro' me like hot arrows headed with adder's Teeth : since my Rheumatic Fever at school I have suffered nothing like it ! Of course, I threw off my girdle—for such damned Twitches ! I would rather have old Scratch himself, whom all the Brimstone in Hell can't cure, than endure them ! I am still however not free from them—tho' the latter attacks have decreased in violence—you'd laugh to see how pale and haggard I look—and by way of a Clincher, I am almost certain that Hartley has not had the Itch.

A great affliction has fallen on poor Daddy Rich and his Wife. The old man's son went away some two years ago for a Marine, leaving his currying Business, to bring him up to which the good old creature had pinched his Belly and robbed his Back. Ever since he has been wishing and praying only to see him once more, and about a fortnight ago he returned, discharged as an idiot—The day after I came back to Stowey I heard a cry of Murder, and rushed into the house, where I found the poor Wretch, whose physiognomy is truly *hellish*, beating his Father most unmercifully with a great stick. I seized him and pinioned him to the wall, till the peace-officer came—He vows vengeance on me ; but what is really shocking he never sees little Hartley but he grins with hideous distortions of rage, and hints that he'll do him a mischief—and the poor old People who just get enough to feed themselves, are now absolutely pinched, and

never fall to sleep without fear and trembling, lest the son should rise in a fit of insanity and murder them— I shall not rest till he has called the Parish, that something may be done for them.

The money shall be remitted to Dyer as soon as the Books are received. The Bacon is for Poole. I suppose you have read Stedman's Narrative of an Expedition to *Surinam*.¹ Vol. 2nd page 299 are these remarkable Words. "Vultures are compared by some to the Eagle, though those of *Surinam* possess very opposite Qualities. They are indeed Birds of Prey, but instead of feeding on what they kill, like the other noble animal, their chief pursuit is carrion"— Now this tickles me—the poor Vulture, the useful Scavenger in a Climate where Carrion would but for him breed the plague—the noble eagle not only useless but a murderer, and probably tainting the air with his prey. There is indeed a sort of living Carrion, sons of corruption etc., and eke some of the merciful Lady—Planters in *Surinam* etc., etc., etc., on which the Vulture might, without departing from his utility as a scavenger, exercise the Eagle attribute of first knocking on the head. When you want a subject for Stuart,² do prefix the Quotation from Stedman, and make some verses underneath.

As to what you say about the school book I dissent (I am decisive against ever publishing the letters—and were I not, it would take me more trouble to fit 'em up, than they are worth.)³ As to a volume of Poems, I am not in a poetical mood, and moreover am resolved to publish nothing with my name till my Great Work. But the School Book which

¹ Coleridge refers to Stedman, J. G., "Narrative of a five years expedition against the revolted negroes of Surinam, from the years 1772 to 1777, elucidating the history of that country and describing its productions." London, 1796.

² Daniel Stuart (1766-1846) purchased the *Morning Post* in 1795 and the *Courier* in 1796. To these newspapers Coleridge contributed a great number of articles and poems. See *Essays on His Own Times*, 1850. The correspondence between Stuart and Coleridge is published in a privately printed volume, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889.

³ Coleridge probably refers to the long letters written from Germany to Mrs. Coleridge and Poole, several of which were published in the *Friend* as *Satyrane's Letters*, and republished in the *Biog. Lit.* 1817.

I am planning will I think be a lucrative speculation (and it will be an entertaining job. When I have licked the plan enough for you to discern its embryo Lineaments, I will send it you). There are two works which I particularly want and perhaps William Taylor¹ has them, the one is, Herder's Ideas for the History of the Human Race,² I do not accurately remember the German Title, the second, Zimmermann's Geographie der Menschen.³ It is not the Zimmermann who wrote the dull thing about Solitude—would there be any impropriety in your asking Mr. Taylor to lend them me? Probably you know someone in London who would take the Trouble of receiving them and booking them off in the Bridgewater Mail, directed to be left at the old Angel with my direction. But if there be the least Impropriety, I pray you, think no more of it. I would take care that they should be safely re-delivered within a month.

I have very serious Thoughts of trying to get a couple of Pupils, very serious ones.

Poole desires to be kindly remembered to you. I wrote this Epigram on Naso Rubicund Esqr. a dealer in *Secrets*—

You're perfectly safe—for so ruddy your Nose
That talk what you will, 'tis all *under the Rose*.⁴

I have found the long rigmarole verses which I wrote about Pratt etc, but there's nothing in 'em, save facility of Language and oddity of rhyme. If however I go to Bristol I will leave it with Cottle to be sent with any parcel that may be moving towards you. Sara is anxious to hear from Eliza. She desires her kind Love. Young Brimstonello is fast asleep—he is a quaint boy. When I told him you had sent your love to him in a Letter, he sat and thought and thought, and at

¹ William Taylor was one of the first Englishmen to undertake a careful study of German literature. His most famous work was the translation of Bürger's *Lenore* in 1790.

² Coleridge refers to J. G. von Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1784-1791; the work was translated by T. Churchill in 1800.

³ E. A. W. von Zimmermann's *Geographische Geschichte des Menschen* . . . , 1778-1783.

⁴ See *Poems*, 958.

last burst into a fit of Laughter. God bless you and Edith
and all of us ! Yours with affectionate esteem

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 66

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *the Pneumatic Institution, Bristol.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. The MS. of this letter has holes burned in it (for no apparent reason), and some of the words are obliterated. I have indicated the obliterations.]

Humphry Davy (1778-1829) to whom this letter is addressed, came from Cornwall to Bristol, where he began his chemical experiments at the Pneumatic Institution there. His work and his personality attracted the attention of Coleridge and the Bristol poets ; and the Pneumatic Institution was the scene of more than one humorous experiment with the newly-discovered nitrous oxide. Davy was interested not merely in science but in philosophy and poetry as well ; and Coleridge seems to have found his friendship invigorating.

In 1801 Davy was put in charge of the chemical laboratory of the Royal Institution. In 1808 he was instrumental in encouraging Coleridge to give his first course of lectures at the Royal Institution. Davy was knighted in 1812 in recognition of his contributions to science.]

January 1, 1800.

MY DEAR DAVY

Longman ¹ deems it best for you to publish a *Volume*,² and be determined by the Nature of the Sale at what interval you will publish a second—the Volume of what size you find convenient, and you may of course begin printing when you like. All the tradesman part of the Business Longman will settle with Biggs and Cottle. I expected to have heard from Southey—tell him, I have seen Longman, and find him all willingness. But I could only speak in generals ; and am waiting anxiously for the arrival of the first Books.

Davy ! Davy ! if the public Good did not iron and adamant you to England and Bristol, what a little colony might we . . . not make. Tobin, I am sure, would go, and Wordsworth, and I—and Southey. Precious stuff for Dreams—and God knows, I have no time for them !

¹ Thomas Norton Longman (1771-1842) the publisher, during 1800 brought out Coleridge's translations of Schiller. He carried on negotiations with the poet for other works, but nothing materialized, Coleridge being unable to bring to completion any of his projected volumes.

² *Researches, Chemical and Philosophical, chiefly concerning Nitrous Oxide and its Respiration*, i. 1800.

Questions—

On dipping my foot and leg into very hot water, the first sensation was identical with that of having dipped it into very cold. This identity recurred as often as I took my leg out in order to pour in the hot water from the kettle, and put it in again. How is this explained in philosophical Language divested of corpuscular Theories? Define Disgust in philosophical Language. Is it not, speaking as a materialist, always a stomach-sensation conjoined with an idea? What is the cause of that sense of cold, which accompanies inhalation, after having eat peppermint Drops?

If you don't answer me these, I'll send them to the Lady's Diary—where you may find fifty Questions of the same Depth and Kidney.

A Private Query—On our System of Death does it not follow that killing a bad man might [do] him a great deal of Good? And that Buonaparte wants a gentle Dose of this kind, dagger or bullet ad libitum? I wish in your Researches that you and Beddoes would give a compact compressed History of the Human Mind for the last century, considered simply as to the acquisition of Ideas or new arrangement of them. Or if you won't do it there, do it for me—and I will print it with an Essay I am now writing on the principles of Population and Progressiveness.

Godwin talks evermore of you with lively affection—“What a pity that such a man should degrade his vast Talents to Chemistry,” cried he to me—Why, quoth I, how, Godwin! can you thus talk of a science, of which neither you nor I understand an iota etc., etc.; and I defended Chemistry as knowingly at least as Godwin attacked it—affirmed that it united the opposite advantages of immaterializing the mind without destroying the definiteness of the Ideas—nay even while it gave clearness to them—and eke that being necessarily [per]formed with the passion of Hope, it was . . . and we both agreed (for G., as well as I, thinks himself a Poet) that *the Poet* is the greatest possible character etc., etc. Modest Creatures! Hurra, my dear Southey!—you [and I] and Godwin, and Shakespeare, and Milton,

with what an athanasiophagous grin we shall march together—*we poets* : Down with all the rest of the World !—By the word athanasiophagous I mean devouring Immortality by anticipation ! Tis a sweet word !—

God bless you, my dear Davy ! Take my nonsense like a pinch of snuff—sneeze it off, it clears the head—and to Sense and yourself again—with most affectionate esteem

Your's ever

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 67

To WILLIAM TAYLOR.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *Memoir of the Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich*, J. W. Robberds, 1843, i. 318-321.]

London,¹ January 25, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR

I thank you for your kind attention to my letter. That “extract from a letter from Norwich” was given in to the *Morning Post* by Sheridan himself, Who *knew* the whole account to be a tissue of atrocious falsehoods. Jacobinism evinces a gross and unthinking Spirit ; but the Jacobins, as men, are heroes in virtue, compared with Mr. Fox and his party. I know enough of them to know, that more profligate and unprincipled men never disgraced an honest cause. Robert Southey was mistaken—it was merely an account in a letter from Göttingen of a ridiculous statue. I will transcribe the passage. “A statue has lately been put up in Ulric’s garden in honour of Bürger the poet. It represents the Genius of Germany weeping over an urn. The Genius, instead of being eight faces high, is only five ; nor is there anything superhuman about it, except perhaps its position, in which it is impossible for man, woman or child to stand. But notwithstanding all this, you must own there is something very sylvanly romantic in seeing the monument of a great poet put up in the garden of an alehouse.” If I were

¹ On November 27th, 1799, after a visit to Ottery St. Mary, Coleridge arrived in London where he began regularly to write political articles for the *Morning Post*. After four or five months he made his way northward to Grasmere.

in time to get a frank, here I should conclude ; but I cannot endure to make you pay postage for half a sheet of almost vacant paper. I will transcribe therefore a passage or two from some letters which passed between me and Wordsworth in Germany (I should say from Wordsworth, for I have no copies of my own) respecting the merits of Bürger.

" We ¹ have read *Lenore* and a few little things of Bürger ; but upon the whole we were disappointed, particularly in *Lenore*, which we thought in several passages inferior to the English translation.² ' Wie donnerten die Brücken '—how inferior to

' The bridges thunder as they pass,
But earthly sound was none, etc., etc. ' "

I admitted in my reply, that there are more passages of poetry in your translation, but affirmed that it wanted the *rapidity* and *oneness* of the original, and that in the beauty quoted the idea was so striking, that it made me *pause, stand still* and *look*, when I ought to have been driving on with the horse. Your choice of metre I thought unfortunate, and that you had lost the spirit of quotation from the Psalm-book, which gives such dramatic spirit and feeling to the dialogue between the mother and daughter, etc., etc.

Answer.—" As to Bürger, I am yet far from that admiration of him which he has excited in you ; but I am³ by nature slow to admire ; and I am not yet sufficiently master of the language to understand him perfectly. In one point I entirely coincide with you in your feeling concerning his versification. In *Lenore* the concluding double rhymes of the stanza have both a delicious and *pathetic* effect—

Ach ! aber für Lenoren
War Gruss und Kuss verloren.

I accede too to your opinion that Bürger is always the poet ; he is never the mobbist, one of those dim drivellers ⁴ with

¹ " We," *i.e.*, William and Dorothy at Goslar.

² William Taylor had translated Bürger's *Lenore* in 1790, into English ballad metre.

³ " Habemus confitentem reum ! " Note by S. T. C.

⁴ " Dim drivellers is good ! " Note by S. T. C.

which our island has teemed for so many years. Bürger is one of those authors whose book I like to have in my hand, but when I have laid the book down I do not think about him. I remember a hurry of pleasure, but I have few distinct forms that people my mind, nor any recollection of delicate or minute feelings which he has either communicated to me, or taught me to recognise. I do not perceive the presence of character in his personages. I see everywhere the character of Bürger himself; and even this, I agree with you, is no mean merit. But yet I wish him sometimes at least to make me forget himself in his creations. It seems to me, that in poems descriptive of human nature, however short they may be, character is absolutely necessary etc. : incidents are among the lowest allurements of poetry. Take from Bürger the *incidents* which are seldom or ever of his own invention, and much will still remain; there will remain a manner of relating which is almost always spirited and lively, and stamped and peculiarized with genius. Still, I do not find those higher beauties which can entitle him to the name of a *great* poet. I have read *Susan's Dream*, and I agree with you that it is the most perfect and Shaksperian of his poems etc., etc. Bürger is the poet of the animal Spirits. I love his *Tra ra la* dearly; but less of the horn, and more of the lute—and far, far more of the pencil.”

So much for my dear friend Wordsworth. Our controversy was continued, not that I thought Bürger a great poet, but that he really possessed some of the excellencies which W. denied to him; and at last we ended in metaphysical disquisitions on the nature of character etc., etc. My dear Sir, I feel a kind of conviction that one time or other we shall meet. Should choice or chance lead you to London, I have house-room for you, and, as far as loving some who dearly love you may entitle me to say so, heart-room also. I meet here a number of people who say, unconscious that they are lying, that they know you—for a regiment of whom neither you nor I care twopence.

Yours with unfeigned esteem,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 68

To the REV. JOHN P. ESTLIN.

[Original letter, the property of the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery Committee. Privately printed in *Unpublished Letters from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the Rev. John Prior Estlin*, H. A. Bright, 76-81.]

Saturday, March 1st, [1800.]

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND

When I received your letter, some three minutes ago, I turned to my Guide des Voyageurs en Europe to know where Marburg was. I guess it to be Marburg in the Bishoprick of Padderbourne between Frankfort and Cassel. If so, I have not been within forty miles at least of it, having never been many miles below Cassel—at all events, the name of the person, you mention, is wholly unknown to me. I once knew a Miss Bouclere in Devonshire. As to myself, I am *fagging*, and am delivering to the Press some plays of Schiller's.¹ I shall soon however slide away from this place, and devote myself to works of more importance. I have seen Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld² two or three times—once at their own house—admirable people! Dr. Disney's³ sons, at all events the younger, with his shirt collar halfway up his cheek, gave me no high idea of the propriety of Unitarian Dissenters sending their Sons to Established and Idolatrous Universities. It may be very true, that at Hackney they learnt, too many of them, infidelity. The tutor, the *whole* plan of education, the place itself, were all wrong—but many will return to the good cause, in which alone *plain practical Reason* can find footing—but at Cambridge and Oxford they will not learn Infidelity perhaps, or perhaps they may—for now 'tis common enough even there, to my certain know-

¹ The two plays of Schiller's translated by Coleridge are *The Piccolomini* and *The Death of Wallenstein*; both were published by Longman in 1800.

² Mrs. Anna Letitia Barbauld (1743-1825) had married the Rev. R. Barbauld in 1774; at this time they were living at Hampstead. Though Mrs. Barbauld is almost forgotten, she was once a popular writer.

³ Dr. John Disney (1746-1816) was at this time a Unitarian minister in Essex Street, London. His two sons were John, who became a collector of antiquities, and Algernon, who entered the Army.

ledge—but one thing they *will* learn—indifference to all Religions but the Religion of the *Gentleman*; *Gentlemanliness* will be the word, and bring with it a deep *Contempt* for those Dissenters among whom they were born. We Dissenters (for I am proud of the distinction) have somewhat of a simple and *scholarly* formality perhaps: God forbid, we should wholly lose it! but with the young men at Oxford and Cambridge “the *Gentleman*” is the all-implying Word of Honour—a thing more blasting to real Virtue, real liberty, real standing forth for the Truth in Christ, than all the Whoredoms and Impurities which this Gentlemanliness does most generally bring with it. My dear Friend! in the crowded, heartless Party at Dr. Disney’s, O! how I did think of *your* Sunday Suppers, their light uncumbrous simplicity, the heartiness of manner, the literary Christianness of Conversation. Dr. Disney himself I *respect*, highly respect: in the Pulpit he is an *Apostle*, but *there—there it stops*.

My best and overflowing love to Mrs. Estlin, kisses and love to your children—Sara is better. Hartley rampant.

Heaven bless you and your affectionate Friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Mrs. Coleridge begs to be remembered to you and dear Mrs. Estlin “with *all, all, all* my Heart.” There you have her own words.

P.S. Nothing is more common than for conscious Infidels to go into the *Church*. Conscious Arians or Socinians swarm in it—so much for the *Morals* of Oxford and Cambridge. With their too early reasonings, and logic-cuttings, and reading Hume and such like Trash, the young Dissenters are prone to Infidelity, but do you know any Instance of such an Infidel accepting an office that implied the belief of Christianity? It cannot be said, that it is owing to *our* Preferences being so much smaller: for the majority are but Curates in the Established Church, or on small Livings and not so well off as George Burnett was, or Sam Reed would have been, but this is it, my dear Friend! The Education, which Dissenters receive among Dissenters, generates Con-

scientiousness and a scrupulous Turn : will this be gained at the Wine Parties at Cambridge ? The truth is, Dr. Disney himself sees only with too much pleasure the Gentlemanliness. I say thus much, my dear Friend ! because I once heard you speak in Commendation of that which I am now deprecating.

P.S. The more I see of Mrs. Barbauld the more I admire her—that wonderful *Propriety* of Mind ! She has great *acuteness*, very great—yet how steadily she keeps it within the bounds of practical Reason. This I almost envy as well as admire—my own Subtleties too often lead me into strange (though God be praised) transient out-of-the-way-nesses. Oft like a winged spider,¹ I am entangled in a new-spun web, but never fear for me, 'tis but the flutter of my wings—and off I am again !

The little man so full of great affections, you cannot love him better than I.

LETTER 69

To WILLIAM GODWIN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries*, C. Kegan Paul, 1876, ii. 2-4.]

T. Poole's, Nether Stowey, Bridgewater.
Wednesday, May 21, 1800.

DEAR GODWIN

I received your letter this morning, and had I not, still I am almost confident that I should have written to you before the end of the week. Hitherto the translation of the Wallenstein has prevented me ; not that it so engrossed my time, but that it wasted and depressed my spirits and left a sense of wearisomeness and disgust, which unfitted me for anything but sleeping or immediate society. I say this, because I ought to have written to you first, and as I am not behind you in affectionate esteem, so I would not be thought to lag in those outward and visible signs that both show and

¹ “ By the bye, there is no such Creature. But in similies if a Phoenix, why not a winged spider ? ” Note by S. T. C.

vivify the inward and spiritual grace. Believe me, you recur to my thoughts frequently, and never without pleasure, never without making out of the past a little day-dream for the future. I left Wordsworth on the 4th of this month. If I cannot procure a suitable house at Stowey I return to Cumberland and settle at Keswick, in a house of such a prospect, that if according to you and Hume, impressions and ideas *constitute* our being, I shall have a tendency to become a god, so sublime and beautiful will be the series of my visual existence. But whether I continue here or migrate thither, I shall be in a beautiful country, and have house-room and heart-room for you, and you must come and write your next work at my house. My dear Godwin, I remember you with so much pleasure and our conversations so distinctly, that I doubt not we have been mutually benefitted; but as to your poetic and physiopathic feelings, I more than suspect that dear little Fanny and Mary have had more to do in that business than I. Hartley sends his love to Mary.¹ "What? and not to Fanny?" "Yes, and to Fanny, but I'll *have* Mary." He often talks about them. My poor Lamb! How cruelly afflictions crowd upon him! I am glad that you think of him as I think; he has an affectionate heart, a mind *sui generis*; his taste acts so as to appear like the unmechanic simplicity of an instinct—in brief he is worth an hundred men of *mere* talents. Conversation with the latter tribe is like the use of leaden bells—one warms by exercise—Lamb every now and then *irradiates*, and the beam, though single and fine as a hair, is yet rich with colours, and I both see and feel it. In Bristol I was much with Davy, almost all day; he always talks of you with great affection... If I settle at Keswick, he will be with me in the fall of the year, and so meet you—And let me tell you, Godwin, four such men as you, I, Davy, and Wordsworth, do not meet together in one house every day of the year. I mean, four men so distinct with so many sympathies. I received yesterday a letter from Southey. He arrived at Lisbon,

¹ Coleridge mentions little Hartley's enthusiasm for Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1797-1851) later Mrs. Shelley, several times.

after a prosperous voyage, on the last day of April. His letter to me is dated May-Day. He girds up his loins for a great history of Portugal, which will be translated into the Portuguese in the first year of the Lusitanian Republic.

Have you seen Mrs. Robinson lately? ¹ How is she? Remember me in the kindest and most respectful phrases to her. I wish I knew the particulars of her complaint. For Davy has discovered a perfectly new acid, by which he has restored the use of limbs to persons who had lost them for years (one woman nine years) in cases of supposed rheumatism. At all events, Davy says it *can* do no harm in Mrs. Robinson's case, and if she will try it, he will make up a little parcel, and write her a letter of instructions etc. . . .

God bless you—Your sincerely affectionate,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Sara desires to be kindly remembered to you, and sends a kiss to Fanny and "dear meek little Mary."

LETTER 70

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *Pneumatic Institution, Hotwells, Bristol.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. Published in part, *Fragmentary Remains, literary and scientific, of Sir Humphry Davy, Bart.* . . . John Davy, 1858, 75-77.]

*Mr. T. Poole's, Nether Stowey, Somerset.
Saturday Morning, [June, 1800.]*

MY DEAR DAVY .

I sent you on Tuesday last a letter, inclosing 5*£*, being 5 shillings less than I owe you—in the same letter I craved a little of your acid, with a scrawl stating in what cases it might be used. As my Letters go by cross post, I am anxious to know whether you have received it—because by the same post I sent a much larger sum up to the North.

¹ Mrs. Mary Robinson (1758-1800), better known as "Perdita," after several successes in Shakespearean rôles, achieved notoriety as the mistress of George, Prince of Wales (later George IV). Eventually she became a writer of considerable reputation. For an account of Coleridge's literary association with her, see *Coleridge and Mrs. Mary Robinson, Modern Language Notes*, February, 1930.

If you can, send me a little tiny bottle of the acid, sending it to Mrs. Fricker, No. 10, Stokes Croft, with a note to her desiring her to have it delivered to Milton, the Stowey Carrier, for me. This must be done before Thursday, if at all. I have now finally determined on the North—so much for Business.

I received a very kind letter from Godwin, in which he says, that he never thinks of you but with a brother's feelings of love and expectation. Indeed, I am sure, he does not.

I think of translating Blumenbach's ¹ Manual of Natural History—it is very well written, and would, I think, be useful to students as an admirable direction to their studies, and to others it would supply a *general* knowledge of the subject—I will state the contents of the book—1. Of the Naturalia in general, and their division into three Kingdoms. 2. Of organized Bodies in general. 3. Of animals in general. 4. Of the mammalia. 5. Birds. 6. Amphibions. 7. Fishes. 8. Insects. 9. Worms. 10. Plants. 11. Of Minerals in general. 12. Of Stones, and earthy Fossils. 13. Of mineral Salts. 14. Combustible minerals. 15. Of Metals. 16. Petrifactions. At the end there is an alphabetical Index, so that it is at once, a Natural History and a dictionary of Natural History. To each animal etc. all the European names are given—with, of course, the scientific characteristics—I have the last edition, i.e. that of April 1799. Now I wish to know from you whether there is in English already any work of one volume (this would make 800 pages) that renders this useless. In short, should I be right in advising Longman to undertake it? Answer me as soon as you conveniently can. Blumenbach has been no very great discoverer, tho' he has done some respectable things in that way; but he is a man of enormous knowledge, and has an *arranging* head. Ask Beddoes if you do not know.

When you have leisure, you would do me a great service, if you would briefly state your metaphysical system of Im-

¹ "When he [Coleridge] first went into Germany, . . . he attended the lectures of this distinguished professor, at Göttingen, on Physiology and Natural History." *Fragmentary Remains*, 76. Coleridge did not translate this work.

pressions, Ideas, Pleasures, and Pains, the laws that govern them, and the reasons which induce you to consider them as essentially distinct from each other. My motive for this request is the following. As soon as I settle, I shall read Spinoza and Leibnitz, and I particularly wish to know wherein they agree with and wherein they differ from you. If you will do this, I promise you to send you the result—and with it my own creed.

God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Blumenbach's Book contains references to all the best writers on each subject. My friend T. Poole begs me to ask what in your opinion are the parts or properties in the Oak bark which tan skins, and is cold water a complete menstruum for these parts or properties? I understand from Poole, that nothing is so little understood as the Chemical theory of Tanning, tho' nothing is of more importance in the circle of Manufactures. In other words, does Oak bark give out to *cold water* all those of it's parts which tan?

LETTER 71

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *Pneumatic Institution, Hotwells, Bristol.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. This letter illustrates Coleridge's interest in scientific investigation. His versatile mind did much to anticipate the remarkable development of scientific discovery in the nineteenth century. See, for instance, the *Friend*, part iii. and the original plan for the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*.]

*Wednesday, July 15, 1800.*¹

MY DEAR DAVY

Since my arrival at Grasmere I have been afflicted with continual illness, in consequence of a cold from wet—for days together I have been obliged to keep my bed; and when up, I have been prevented till within these few days from reading by a pair of swoln and inflamed eyelids. I hope, that you have suffered no inconvenience from want of the money, which I borrowed of you—it has made me very un-

¹ July 15, 1800 was on Tuesday.

easy ; but in a few days I will take care, that it shall be remitted to you. We remove to our own House in Keswick on Tuesday week—my address is, Mr. Coleridge, Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland. My dear fellow, I would that I could wrap up the view from my House in a pill of opium, and send it to you ! I should then be sure of seeing you in the fall of the year. But you *will* come.

As soon as I have disembrangled my affairs by a couple of months' Industry, I shall attack chemistry, like a Shark. In the meantime do not forget to fulfil your promise of sending me a synopsis of your metaphysical opinions. I am even *anxious* about this. I see your Researches on the nitrous oxide regularly advertised—Be so kind as to order one to be left for me at Longman's, that it may be sent with my box. The difficulty of procuring Books is the greatest disadvantage, under which I shall labor. The carriage from London by the waggon is cross-roadish, and insecure ; that by the mail attacks the Purse with 7 Hydra Mouths all open. I read the day before yesterday in a German Book a fact which appeared to me analogous to those facts exhibited by the respiration of the nitrous Oxyde. The account of the sickness is circumstantially described by persons who attended the patient, " a young, fiery, lively youth in the 17th year of his age." At the commencement of the summer of 1783 he was seized during dinner with a Cramp in his Chest, which was followed by a Fever that continued for four weeks ; at the conclusion of which time symptoms of amelioration appeared ; but one night he was attacked by the most frightful convulsions, which lasted in all their fury 24 hours without intermission. After these convulsions the Fever recommenced, and was accompanied by strong Delirium. The subject of Death, and his old occupation as a Merchant's clerk formed the subjects of his Discourse—in which he discovered a power of mind, a regularity, a logic, an eloquence, wholly unknown in him in his state of health. These orations lasted always till they were intercepted by the cramp in his chest—and when the whole Paroxysm, all the convulsions, delirious orations, and cramp were over, instead of

appearing exhausted he was to an extraordinary degree elevated, and in such extreme high spirits that whoever had seen him without knowing his previous circumstances would have concluded him to have been in rampant high health. The Paroxysms returned, and ever with such impetuosity that five stout men could scarcely keep him down ; yet ever they left him in the same high spirits and undiminished strength. During his paroxysms he exhibited a proud and fierce contempt for all around him, the color of black was intolerable to him—as were watch ribbons and watch chains and looking-glasses. If he saw one of these in the intervals, his Paroxysm returned instantly. After a Paroxysm, while he was in rampant high spirits, he was persuaded to have a vein opened—the Blood was almost black, burst from the vein with violence, foam'd, and was “ in every respect so remarkable,” says the author, “ that it [was] easily comprehensible how it should have produced this strange revolution of the whole man. I asked him how he *felt* when the Paroxysm was coming on. He answered that at first he had a sensation of heat from about the stomach spreading upwards till it reached his head and that then he began to be more and more giddy and drunken, and objects grew more and more dim before his eyes, till he lost all consciousness—and this was the moment in which the Convulsions always began, which convulsions lasted in their full fury never less than 8 minutes, but oftener for half an hour. In this way the Disease continued without any apparent abatement ten weeks, at which time, after a violent Paroxysm, the Patient said that *that* would be the last.” And so it proved. From this time the Convulsions ceased, and, to the astonishment of all, the Patient had lost nothing either of his former Powers, or bodily strength, or high animal spirits. He was ordered a medicinal Bath (eine Badekur) that was to secure him from all future attacks—but after three weeks the Paroxysms returned, tho' not so violently—and without convulsions, except in one instance in which he had been violently frightened. At the end of 14 days he was completely cured by a violent Dysenterie. From this moment to the time in

which the account was published (May 31, 1784) he enjoyed the most perfect Health, had in no part of the Disease, and in no hour after, lost any strength, and his animal spirits appear more impetuous than they were before. But he has not the least consciousness of any one thing that past during his whole sickness—the whole ten weeks seem annihilated from his present Being—This account is in Moritz's magazine for experimental Psychology, p. 12, of the third number of the second volume. Does it not seem here, as if Nature herself had elaborated the Nitrous oxyde out of the common air?

In Wordsworth's case, which I have sent to Beddoes, you will see a curious instance of ideas, linked with feeling habitually, at length forming blind associations with a particular pain, probably in the right hypochondrium—so as immediately to excite that pain.

I have read the little chemist's pocket-book twice over. Do, do, my dear Davy! come here in the fall of the year. Sheridan has sent to me again about my Tragedy—I do not know what will come of it—he is an unprincipled Rogue.

Remember me to Mr. Coates when you see [him]—and be sure you do to Matthew Coates, and Mrs. Coates. Will you be so kind as just to look over the sheets of the lyrical Ballads? What are you now doing? God love you! Believe me most affectionately, my dear Davy,

Your friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 72

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. This letter was written to Poole on the day the Coleridges arrived at Greta Hall, Keswick, after a month with the Wordsworths.]

July 24, 1800.

MY DEAR POOLE

Within a few days of my arrival at Grasmere I increased the cold, which I had caught at Liverpool, to a rheumatic fever almost, which confined me to my bed for some days, and left me so weak, and listless, that working

was hateful to me—and my eye lids were so swoln, that it was painful too. Had I written to you, I could have written only as a Duty—and with that feeling never will I write to you. We met at Bristol a pleasant chaise companion who did not leave us till we arrived at Liverpool—we travelled the first day to Tewkesbury, the next night we slept at Shrewsbury, having passed thro' Worcester, Kidderminster, Bridgnorth, and Colebrook Dale—the next night at Chester, where we stayed a day and a half. It is a walled city, a walk on the walls all around it—the air of the city is thick enough to be edible, and stinks. From Chester we proceeded, crossing a ferry of 7 miles, to Liverpool. At Liverpool we took up our quarters with Dr. Crompton,¹ who lives at Eton, a noble seat four miles and a half from the town—he received us with joyous hospitality, and Mrs. Crompton, who is all I can conceive of an angel, with most affectionate gladness. Here we stayed 8 or 9 days, during which I saw a great deal of Dr. Currie,² Roscoe,³ Rathbone⁴ (Colebrook Reynolds's Brother-in-law) and other literati. Currie is a genuine philosopher, a man of mild and rather solemn manners—if you had ever seen my Brother George, I would have referred you to him for a striking resemblance of Currie. I would have you by all means order the late edition in four Volumes, of Burns's Works—the Life is written by Currie, and a masterly specimen of philosophical Biography it is. Roscoe is a man of the most delightful manners—natural, sweet, and cheerful—zealous in kindness, and a republican, with all the feelings of prudence and all the manners of good sense—so that he is beloved by the aristocrats themselves. He has a nice

¹ Dr. Peter Crompton of Eton House, near Liverpool, and his wife, Mary, were much admired by Coleridge. Mrs. Crompton is often alluded to in terms of highest praise. Charles Crompton, Dr. Crompton's son, achieved distinction as a justice of the Queen's bench, etc.

² Dr. James Currie (1756-1805), a physician and an editor and biographer of Burns.

³ William Roscoe (1753-1831), an historian and later member of Parliament from Leeds.

⁴ William Rathbone (1757-1809), a merchant and an active participant in the abolition movement. His wife Hannah Mary (née Reynolds) was an authoress and a woman of great charm and culture.

matronly wife, and 9 fine children. Rathbone is a Quaker, as brimful of enthusiastic goodness as a vessel of mortality can be. He is a man of immense fortune. The union of all these men is quite amiable—they truly love each other, a band of Brothers. And yet by their wisdom in keeping back all political trials of power in Liverpool—they have stifled party spirit in that city, and engaged themselves to be the founders of a most magnificent Library—magnificent as a Building, respectable in it's present stock of Books, and magnificent in what it is to be. They have received last week an accession of 3000*£*, all to be laid out in books of acknowledged reputation—and the yearly income of the foundation is 1000*£*. The slave-merchants of Liverpool fly over the heads of the slave-merchants of Bristol, as Vultures over carrion crows. This library is called the Athenaeum. In religion Currie, I suppose, is a philosopher—Roscoe is a pious Deist—Rathbone, I suppose, is the same; or more probably he cloathes his Deism even to his own mind in the language of Scripture—a Christian, as Taylor is a Platonist. But this is all guess.

On this day I arrived at Keswick, and have entered on my habitation. Wordsworth will stay at Grasmere for a year to come at least—it is possible he may not quit at all. He is well, unless when he uses any effort of mind—then he feels a pain in his left side, which threatens to inter[dict] all species of composition to him. Our goods are all arrived—and now in house at Keswick, . . .¹ My house, heaven forbid that I shall begin to write at the fag end of such a beggarly sheet of paper as this. No! as soon as this stress and hurry is over I shall open upon you in a sheet that might serve for a sheet! My address is

Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.

We are very anxious about your Mother—I have said to myself, that no news is good news. My love to Ward. My eyes still remain so weak that it is disagreeable to me to read over my own letter. I wish, that Ward would immediately copy for me the third letter which I wrote, descriptive of the

¹ Seal.

Harz Mountains. I have got the two first ; but the last is lost and I want it *immediately*. Sheridan has sent me a strange sort of a message about my Tragedy—wishing me to write for the stage, making all his old offers over again, and charging the non-representation of my play on my extreme obstinacy in refusing to have it at all altered ! Did you ever hear of such a damned impudent Dog ? God forever bless you, my dear Poole—and your most affectionate

Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 73

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *Pneumatic Institution, Hotwells, Bristol.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. Published with omissions, *Fragmentary Remains, literary and scientific, of Sir Humphry Davy, Bart.* . . John Davy, 1858, 77-79.]

*Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland,
Friday Evening, July 25, 1800.*

MY DEAR DAVY

Work hard, and if Success do not dance up like the bubbles in the Salt (with the Spirit Lamp under it) may the Devil and his Dame take success ! Sdeath, my dear fellow ! from the Window before me there is a great *Camp* of Mountains—Giants seem to have pitch'd their tents there—Each mountain is a Giant's tent—and how the light streams from them—and the shadows that travel upon them ! Davy ! I *ake* for you to be with us.

W. Wordsworth is such a lazy fellow that I bemire myself by making promises for him—the moment, I received your letter, I wrote to him. He will, I hope, immediately write to Biggs and Cottle—At all events those poems must not as yet be delivered up to them, because that beautiful Poem, *The Brothers*,¹ which I read to you in Paul Street, I neglected to deliver to you—and that must begin the volume. I trust however that I have invoked the sleeping Bard with a spell so potent, that he will awake and deliver up that Sword of

¹Cf. *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford), 95-102.

Argantyr, which is to rive the Enchanter *Gaudy-verse* from his Crown to his Fork.

What did you think of that case, I translated for you from the German? That I was a well-meaning *Sutor*, who had ultra-crepidated with more zeal than wisdom! I give myself credit for that word "ultra-crepidated,"¹ it started up in my Brain like a creation. I write to Tobin by this Post. Godwin is gone Ireland-ward, on a visit to Curran, says the "Morning Post"; to Grattan, writes C. Lamb.

We drank tea the night before I left Grasmere, on the Island in that lovely lake, our kettle swung over the fire hanging from the branch of a Fir-tree, and I lay and saw the woods, and mountains, and lake all trembling, and as it were *idealized* thro' the subtle smoke which rose up from the clear red embers of the fir-apples, which we had collected; afterwards, we made a glorious Bonfire on the margin, by some elder bushes, whose twigs heaved and sobbed in the up-rushing column of smoke—and the Image of the Bonfire, and of us that danced round it—ruddy laughing faces in the twilight—the Image of this in a Lake smooth as that sea, to whose waves the Son of God had said, *Peace*! May God and all his Sons, love you as I do—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Sara desires her kind remembrances—I Hartley is a spirit that dances on an aspen leaf—the air that yonder sallow-faced and yawning Tourist is breathing, is to my Babe a perpetual Nitrous Oxide. Never was more joyous creature born. Pain with him is so wholly trans-substantiated by the Joys that had rolled on before, and rushed in after, that oftentimes 5 minutes after his mother had whipt him, he has gone up and asked her to whip him again.

¹ "Ne sutor ultra crepidam." S. T. C.

LETTER 74

To SAMUEL PURKIS, *Brentford near London.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the English Romantic School*, A. Brandl, 1887, 267. Samuel Purkis, to whom this letter is addressed, was a tanner and a man of letters. Coleridge met him through Thomas Poole.]

Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.
Tuesday, July 29, 1800.

DEAR PURKIS

I write to you from the *Leads* of Greta Hall, a Tenement in the possession of S. T. Coleridge, Esq. Gentleman—Poet and Philosopher in a mist—this Greta Hall is a House on a Small eminence, a furlong from Keswick in the county of Cumberland. Yes—my dear Sir! here I am—with Skiddaw at my back—on my right hand the Bassenthwaite Water with it's majestic *Case* of Mountains, all of simplest outline—looking slant, direct over the feather of this infamous Pen, I see the Sun setting—my God! what a scene! Right before me is a great *Camp* of single Mountains—each in shape resembles a Giant's Tent; and to the left, but closer to it far than the Bassenthwaite Water to my right, is the lake of Keswick, with it's Islands and white sails, and glossy Lights of Evening—*crowned* with green meadows, but the three remaining sides are encircled by the most fantastic Mountains, that ever Earthquakes made in sport; as fantastic, as if Nature had *laughed* herself into the convulsion, in which they were made. Close behind me at the foot of Skiddaw flows the Greta, I hear it's murmuring distinctly—then it curves round almost in a semicircle, and is now catching the purple Lights of the scattered Clouds above it directly before me—A.A.A. Is the river and B. my House. Till now I have been grievously indisposed—now I am enjoying the Godlikeness of the Place, in which I am settled, with the voluptuous and joy-trembling Nerves of Convalescence. We arrived here last week—I was confined a fortnight at Grasmere. At Liverpool I was very much with Roscoe, a man of the most fascinating manners—if good sense, sweetness, simplicity,



hilarity, joining in a literary man who is a good Husband and the excellent Father of nine children, can give any man's manners the claim to that word.

Sara Coleridge is well—she expects to be confined in the first weeks of September. Hartley is all Health and extacy—He is a spirit dancing on an aspen Leaf—unwearied in Joy, from morning to night indefatigably joyous.

And how do you go on? and dear Mrs. Purkis? And your little ones? Surely 'tis but a needless *form* for me to say, with what sincere exultation I should stretch out the right-hand of fellowship to you, if chance or choice should lead you hither! I would, I knew the spell that could force you. We have pleasant acquaintance here—and I shall have free access to the magnificent Library of Sir Wilfred Lawson—yet you may well suppose, I did not quit Stowey without dejection, and that I cannot now think of any separation from Poole without a Pang. Now, while I gaze, there is one dark Slip of Cloud that lies across the bright Sun on the Mountain Top! and such, my dear Purkis! is that thought to me.

I have greatly regretted that my engagements in London prevented me from *cultivating* the acquaintance of Mr. Howard.¹ I was exceedingly struck with him, and at that time and since have often wished for an opportunity of experimenting concerning the benefit which a Poet and Painter might be of to each other's minds, if they were long together. When you see him, remember me to him expressly—and add, that if wearied with town or permitted by his occupations to leave it for a while, he should feel any inclination to see how Nature² at once to gratify and baffle Feeling, I have a plain table and a quiet room at his service, for any length of time he can stay with me. In short, I should be *very glad* to see him. Can't you come down together? Hang it—don't stand deliberating, but come. My wife will not let me stay on the Leads—I must go, and un-

¹ Henry Howard (1769-1847) was a successful portrait and historical painter. During this year (1800) he was elected an associate of the Royal Academy.

² MS. torn.

pack a Trunk for her—she cannot *stoop* to it—thanks to my late Essay on Population.

God bless you and [S. T. COLERIDGE.]

LETTER 75

To WILLIAM GODWIN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *William Godwin : His Friends and Contemporaries*, C. Kegan Paul, 1876, ii. 6.]

Monday [Sept. 1800.]

DEAR GODWIN

There are vessels every week from Dublin to Wor-
kington, which place is 16 miles from my house, through a
divine country, but these are idle regrets. I know not the
nature of your present pursuits, whether or no they are such
as to require the vicinity of large and curious libraries. If
you were engaged in any work of imagination or reasoning,
not biographical not historical, I should repeat and urge my
invitation after my wife's confinement. Our house is situ-
ated on a rising ground, not two furlongs from Keswick,
about as much from the Lake Derwentwater, and about two
miles from the Lake Bassenthwaite—both lakes and moun-
tains we command. The river Greta runs behind our house,
and before it too, and Skiddaw is behind us—not half a mile
distant indeed just distant enough to enable us to view it as
a Whole. The garden, orchard, fields and immediate
country all delightful. I have, or have the use of, no incon-
siderable collection of books. In *my* Library you will find
all the Poets and Philosophers, and many of the best old
writers. Below, in our parlour, belonging to our landlord,
but in my possession, are almost all the usual trash of
Johnsons, Gibbons, Robertsons etc., with the Encyclo-
paedia Britannica, etc. Sir Wilfred Lawson's ¹ magnificent
library is some eight or nine miles distant, and he is liberal
in the highest degree in the management of it. And now for
your letter. I swell out my chest and place my hand on my
heart, and swear aloud to all that you *have* written, or shall

¹ Coleridge spells the name both Wilfred and Guilfred Lawson.

write, against lawyers and the practice of the law. When you next write so eloquently and so well against it, or against anything, be so good as to leave a larger space for your wafer ; as by neglect of this, a part of your last was obliterated. The character of Curran,¹ which you have sketched most ably, is a frequent one in its moral essentials, though, of course among the most rare, if we take it with all its intellectual accompaniments. Whatever I have read of Curran's, has impressed me with a deep conviction of his genius. Are not the Irish in general a more eloquent race than we ? Of North Wales my recollections are faint, and as to Wicklow I only know from the newspapers that it is a mountainous country. As far as my memory will permit me to decide on the grander parts of Carnarvonshire, I may say that the single objects are superior to any which I have seen elsewhere, but there is a deficiency in combination. I know of no mountain in the North equal to Snowdon, but then we have an encampment of huge mountains, in no harmony perhaps to the eye of the mere painter, but always interesting, various and, as it were nutritive. Height is assuredly an advantage, as it connects the earth with the sky, by the clouds that are ever skimming the summits or climbing up, or creeping down the sides, or rising from the chasm, like smoke from a cauldron, or veiling or bridging the higher parts or lower parts of waterfalls. That you were less impressed by North Wales I can easily believe ; it is possible that the scenes of Wicklow may be superior, but it is certain that you were in a finer irritability of spirit to enjoy them. The first pause and silence after a return from a very interesting visit is somewhat connected with langour in all of us. Besides, as you have observed, mountains and mountainous scenery taken collectively and cursorily, must depend for their charms on their novelty. They put on their immortal interest then first, when we have resided among them, and learnt to understand their language, their written character and intelligible sounds, and all their eloquence, so various, so unwearied.

¹ Coleridge apparently refers to John Philpot Curran (1750-1817), an Irish judge of considerable fame.

Then you will hear no "twice-told tale". I question if there be a room in England which commands a view of mountains, and lakes, and woods and vales superior to that in which I am now sitting. I say this, because it is destined for your study, if you come. You are kind enough to say that you feel yourself more natural and unreserved with me than with others. I suppose that this in great measure arises from my own ebullient unreservedness. Something, too, I will hope may be attributed to the circumstance that my affections are deeply interested in my opinions. But here, too, you will meet with Wordsworth, "the latchet of whose shoes I am unworthy to unloose", and five miles from Wordsworth Charles Lloyd has taken a house. Wordsworth is publishing a second volume of the "Lyrical Ballads", which title is to be dropped, and his "Poems" substituted. Have you seen Sheridan since your return? How is it with your tragedy? Were you in town when Miss Bayley's¹ tragedy was represented? How was it that it proved so uninteresting? Was the fault in the theatre, the audience, or the play? It must have excited a deeper feeling in you than that of mere curiosity, for doubtless the tragedy has great merit. Have you read the "Wallenstein"? Prolix and crowded and dragging as it is, it is yet quite a model for its judicious management of the sequence of the scenes, and such it is held in German theatres. Our English acting plays are many of them woefully deficient in this part of the dramatic trade and mystery.

Hartley is well, and all life and action—Yours with unfeigned esteem,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Kisses for Mary and Fanny. God love them. I wish you would come and look out for a house for yourself here. You know "I wish" is privileged to have something silly to follow it.

¹ Coleridge, of course, means Joanna Baillie (1762-1851). The tragedy referred to is *De Monfort*, which was produced with John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons in leading parts, but failed miserably.

LETTER 76

To WILLIAM GODWIN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *William Godwin : His Friends and Contemporaries*, C. Kegan Paul, 1876, ii. 9-11.]

Monday, Sep. 22, 1800.

DEAR GODWIN

I received your letter, and with it the enclosed note, which shall be punctually re-delivered to you on the 1st October.

Your tragedy to be exhibited at Christmas !¹ I have indeed merely read your letter, so it is not strange that my heart still continues beating out of time. Indeed, indeed, Godwin, such a stream of hope and fear rushed in on me, when I read the sentence, as you would not permit yourself to feel. If there be anything yet undreamed of in our philosophy ; if it be, or if it be possible, that thought can impel Thought out of the visual limit of a man's own skull and heart ; if the clusters of ideas, which contribute our identity, do ever connect and unite with a greater whole ; if feelings could ever propagate themselves without the servile ministrations of undulating air or reflected light—I seem to feel within myself a strength and a power of desire that might start a modifying, commanding impulse on a whole theatre. What does all this mean ? Alas ! that sober sense should know no other to construe all this, except by the tame phrase, I wish you success . . . [sic]

Your feelings respecting Baptism are, I suppose, much like mine ! At times I dwell on man with such reverence, resolve all his follies and superstitions into such grand primary laws of intellect, and in such wise so contemplate them as ever-varying incarnations of the Eternal Life—that the Llama's dung-pellet, or the cow-tail which the dying Brahmin clutches convulsively become sanctified and sublime by the feelings which cluster round them. In that

¹ Godwin's *Tragedy of Antonio* was presented at Drury Lane on Saturday, December 13, 1800, and "damned finally and hopelessly." See C. Kegan Paul, *op. cit.*, ii. 48.

mood I exclaim, my boys shall be christened ! But then another fit of moody philosophy attacks me. I look at my doted-on Hartley—he moves, he lives, he finds impulses from within and from without, he is the darling of the sun and of the breeze. Nature seems to bless him as a thing of her own. He looks at the clouds, the mountains, the living beings of the earth, and vaults and jubilates ! Solemn looks and solemn words have been hitherto connected in his mind with great and magnificent objects only : with lightning, with thunder, with the waterfall blazing in the sunset. Then I say, shall I suffer him to see grave countenances and hear grave accents, while his face is sprinkled ? Shall I be grave myself and tell a lie to him ? Or shall I laugh, and teach him to insult the feelings of his fellowmen ? Besides, are we not all in this present hour fainting beneath the duty of Hope ? From such thoughts I stand up, and vow a book of severe analysis, in which I will tell *all* I believe to be truth in the nakedest language in which it can be told.¹

My wife is now quite comfortable. Surely you might come and spend the very next four weeks, not without advantage to both of us. The very glory of the place is coming on. The local Genius is just arranging himself in his attributes. But above all, I press it, because my mind has been busied with speculations that are closely connected with those pursuits which have hitherto constituted your ability and importance ; and ardently as I wish you success on the stage, I yet cannot frame myself to the thought that you should cease to appear as a *bold* moral thinker. I wish you to write a book on the power of the words, and the processes by which the human feelings form affinities with them. In short, I wish you to philosophize Horne Tooke's system, and to solve the great questions, whether there be reason to hold that an action bearing all the semblance of predesigning consciousness may yet be simply organic, and whether a series of such actions are possible ? And close on the heels

¹ “ In November 1803 all three children [Hartley, Derwent, and Sara] were publicly baptized—[Derwent having been previously baptized at a private rite] but only, again, ‘ to please the good people ’, not the father.” *Life*, 115 note.

of this question would follow, Is Logic the *Essence* of thinking? In other words Is *Thinking* impossible without arbitrary signs? And how far is the word 'arbitrary' a misnomer? Are not words, etc., parts and germinations of the plant? And what is the law of their growth? In something of this sort I would endeavour to destroy the old antithesis of Words and Things; elevating, as it were, Words into Things and living things too. All the nonsense of vibrating etc., you would of course dismiss. If what I have written appear nonsense to you, or commonplace thoughts in a harlequinade of *Outré* expressions, suspend your judgment till we see each other.

Yours sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I was in the country when Wallenstein was published. Longman sent me down half-a-dozen. The carriage back, the book was not worth.

LETTER 77

To THOMAS POOLE, *Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. A few lines published *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 15.]

[Postmark, Oct. 14, 1800.]

For the last fortnight, my dear Poole, I have been *about* to write you—but jolts and ruts, and flings have constantly unhoused my Resolves. The truth is, the endeavor to finish *Christabel*, (which has swelled into a Poem of 1400 lines)¹ for the second Volume of the *Lyrical Ballads* threw my business terribly back—and now I am sweating for it—Dunning letters etc. etc.—all the hell of an Author. I wish, I had been a Tanner. However to come to business—The essays have been published in the *Morning Post*,² and have to use the cant phrase, made great sensation. In *one* place

¹ As the two parts of *Christabel* contain only 677 lines, I cannot explain this reference. On October 9, 1800, Coleridge wrote to Davy that "the *Christabel* was running up to 1,300 lines." See *Letters*, i. 337 and note.

² For the essays referred to, see *Essays on His Own Times*. (Ed. by Sara Coleridge), 1850, ii. 413-456. Reprinted from the *Morning Post* of October 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 14, 1800.

only I have ventured to make a slight *alteration*, and I prefixed one essay, *chiefly* of my own writing, and made two or three *additions* in the enumeration of the effects of war. Now I wish all to be republished in a small pamphlet, but should like to have one more essay of considerable length detailing the effect and operation of paper currency on the price of the articles of life—you have in Frederic Wen's Book which would furnish important documents. In the meantime I wish you could contrive between you and Chester or Machy to take in the *Morning Post*. You will see therein all I am able to say and reason, and your arguments will come up in the rear, like the Roman Triarii, on whom alone, you know, depended the stress of the battle and the hope of the victory. Those hitherto published I shall cut out, and enclose in a letter (paying the postage, that you may not lose your temper!). I shall write for Stuart till Christmas; and intend to carry on a periodical work in numbers, to be afterwards republished in a Volume. Mrs. Coleridge and child are well—I am tolerable, only my eyes are bad—indeed this complaint in my poor eyes and eye lids recurs with alarming frequency. Wordsworth's Health is very indifferent—I see him upon an average about once a month, or perhaps three weeks. Love to Ward and your Mother—

God love you, and your affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 78

To JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, *Gunville near Blandford, Dorset.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. Vaughan Williams. Published in part and incorrectly, *Reminiscences*, 438-443 (Cottle omits the passage relating to himself); and in full, *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. B. Litchfield, 1903, 104-110.]

Keswick,

November 1, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR

I would fain believe, that the experiment which your Brother has made in the W. Indies,¹ is not wholly a dis-

¹ Tom Wedgwood had spent a few months in the West Indies, in the early part of 1800, trying to regain his health.

couraging one. If a warm climate did nothing but only prevented him from growing worse, it surely evidenced *some* power—and perhaps a climate equally favourable in a country of more various interest, Italy or the South of France, may tempt your Brother to make a longer trial. If (disciplining myself into *silent* cheerfulness) I could be of any comfort to him by being his companion and attendant for two or three months, on the supposition that he should wish to travel and was at a loss for a companion more fit, I would go with him with a willing affection. You will easily see, my dear friend, that I say this, only to increase the *range* of your Brother's choice—for even in chusing there is some pleasure.

There happen frequently little odd coincidences in time, that recall momentary faith in the notion of sympathies acting in absence. I heard of your Brother's Return for the first time on Monday last (the day on which your letter is dated) from Stoddart.¹ Had it rained on my naked Skin, I could not have felt more strangely. The three or 4 hundred miles that are between us, seemed converted into a moral distance ; and I knew that the whole of this silence I was myself accountable for, for I ended my last letter by promising to follow it with a second and longer one before you could answer the first. But immediately on my arrival in this country I undertook to finish a poem which I had begun, entitled *Christabel*, for a second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. I tried to perform my promise ; but the deep unutterable Disgust, which I had suffered in the translation of that accursed *Wallenstein*, seemed to have stricken me with barrenness—for I tried and tried, and nothing would come of it. I desisted with a deeper dejection than I am willing to remember. The wind from the Skiddaw and Borrowdale was often as loud as wind need be—and many a walk in the clouds on the mountains did I take ; but all would not do—till one day I dined out at the house of a neighbouring clergy-

¹ Sir John Stoddart (1773-1856) became king's advocate at Malta in 1803 and chief-justice in 1826. His sister Sarah Stoddart married William Hazlitt. It was because of Stoddart's urgent invitation that Coleridge went to Malta in 1804. (See Letter 122, dated Aug. 14, 1803.)

man, and somehow or other drank so much wine, that I found some effort and dexterity requisite to balance myself on the hither edge of sobriety. The next day, my verse making faculties returned to me, and I proceeded successfully—till my poem grew so long and in Wordsworth's opinion so impressive, that he rejected it from his volume as disproportionate both in size and merit, and as discordant in its character. In the meantime, I had gotten myself entangled in the old Sorites of the old Sophist, Procrastination—I had suffered my necessary business to accumulate so terribly, that I neglected to write to any one—till the Pain, I suffered from not writing, made me waste as many hours in dreaming about it, as would have sufficed for the letter-writing of half a life. But there is something beside time requisite for the writing of a letter—at least with me. My situation here is indeed a delightful situation ; but I feel what I have lost—feel it deeply—it recurs more often and more painfully, than I had anticipated—indeed, so much so that I scarcely ever feel myself impelled, that is to say, *pleasurably* impelled to write to Poole. I used to feel myself more at home in his great windy Parlour, than in my own cottage. We were well suited to each other—my animal spirits corrected his inclinations to melancholy ; and there was something both in his understanding and in his affections so healthy and manly, that my mind freshened in his company, and my ideas and habits of thinking acquired day after day more of substance and reality. Indeed, indeed, my dear Sir, with tears in my eyes, and with all my heart and soul I wish it were as easy for us all to meet, as it was when you lived at Upcott. Yet when I revise the step, I have taken, I know not how I could have acted otherwise than I did act. Everything, I promised myself in this country, has answered far beyond my expectation. The room in which I write commands six distinct Landscapes—the two Lakes, the Vale, the River, and mountains and mists, and clouds, and sunshine make endless combinations, as if heaven and earth were for ever talking to each other. Often when in a deep Study I have walked to the window and remained there *looking without*

seeing, all at once the Lake of Keswick and the fantastic mountains of Borrowdale at the head of it, have entered into my mind with a suddenness, as if I had been snatched out of Cheapside and placed for the first time, on the spot where I stood—and that is a delightful Feeling—these Fits and Trances of *Novelty* received from a long known object. The river of Greta flows behind our house, roaring like an untamed son of the Hills, then winds round, and *glides* away in the front—so that we live in a peninsula. But besides this ethereal Eye-feeding, we have very substantial conveniences. We are close to the town, where we have respectable and neighbourly acquaintance, and a most sensible and truly excellent medical man. Our Garden is part of a large nursery Garden, which is the same to us and as private as if the whole had been our own, and thus too we have delightful walks without passing our Garden gates. My Landlord,¹ who lives in the sister House, (for the two Houses are built so as to look like one great one) is a modest and kind man, of a singular character. By the severest economy he raised himself from a Carrier into the possession of a comfortable Independence—he was always very fond of reading, and has collected nearly 500 volumes of our most esteemed modern Writers, such as Gibbon, Hume, Johnson, etc., etc. His habits of economy and simplicity remain with him—and yet so very disinterested a man I scarcely ever knew. Lately when I wished to settle with him about the Rent of our House, he appeared much affected, told me that my living near him and the having so much of Hartley's company were great comforts to him and his housekeeper²—that he had no children to provide for, and did not mean to marry—and in short, that he did not want any rent at all from me. 'This, of course, I laughed him out of ; but he absolutely refused to receive any rent for the first half year, under the Pretext, that the house was not completely finished. Hartley quite *lives* at the house—and it is as you may suppose no small joy to my wife to have a good affectionate motherly woman

¹ Mr. Jackson was the owner of Greta Hall.

² Mrs. Wilson, the Coleridge children's beloved 'Wilsey.'

divided from her only by a Wall. Eighteen miles from our House lives Sir Guilfred Lawson, who has a princely Library, chiefly of natural History—a kind, and generous, but weak and ostentatious sort of man, who has been abundantly civil to me. Among other rarer shews he keeps a wild beast or two, with some eagles, etc. The Master of the Beasts at Exeter change, sent him down a large Bear—with it a long letter of directions concerning the food etc. of the animal, and many solicitations respecting other agreeable Quadrupeds, which he was *desirous* to send to the Baronet, at a moderate Price, concluding in this manner—“and remain your Honor’s most devoted humble servant, J. P. P.S. *Permit* me, Sir Guilfred, to send you a Buffalo and a Rhinoceros.” As neat a Postscript as I ever heard!—the tradesmanlike coolness with which these pretty little animals occurred to him just at the finishing of his letter!! You will in the course of three weeks see the Letters on the rise and condition of the German Boers.¹ I found it convenient to make up a volume out of my Journeys, etc, in North Germany—and the letters (your name of course erased) are in the Printers’ Hands. I was so weary of transcribing and *composing*, that when I found those more carefully written than the rest, I even sent them off as they were. Poor Alfred!² I have not seen it in print. Charles Lamb wrote me the following account of it—“I have just received from Cottle a magnificent Copy of his Guinea Alfred! Four and 20 books to read in the Dog Days. I got as far as the mad monk the first day, and fainted. Mr. Cottle’s Genius strongly points him to the very simple *Pastoral*, but his inclinations direct him perpetually from his calling. He imitates Southey as Row did Shakespeare with his Good morrow to you good master Lieutenant! Instead of *a man*, *a woman*, *a daughter* he constantly writes. ‘One, a man,’ ‘one, a woman,’ ‘one, his daughter’—instead of *the King*, *the Hero*, he constantly writes ‘He, the King,’ ‘He, the Hero’—two

¹ Referring to *The Rise and Condition of the German Boers*, a volume never printed, if ever completed. Cf. *Life*, 119.

² Cottle’s *Alfred*, an *Epic Poem*, published in 1801.

flowers of Rhetoric palpably from the Joan. But Mr. Cottle soars a higher pitch, and when he *is* original, it is in a most original way indeed. His terrific scenes are indefatigable. Serpents, Asps, Spiders, Ghosts, Dead Bodies, and Stair-cases made of NOTHING with Adders' Tongues for Bannisters—My God! what a Brain he must have! He puts as many Plums in his Pudding as my Grandmother used to do—and then his Emerging from Hell's Horrors into *Light*, and treading on pure Flats of this earth for 23 books together"! C. L.¹

My *littlest* one is a very stout Boy indeed²—he is christened by the name of "*Derwent*"—a sort of sneaking affection you see for the *poetical* and *novellish* which I disguised to myself under the Shew, that my Brothers had so many children, Johns, Jameses, Georges, etc., etc., that a handsome christian-like name was not to be had, except by encroaching on the names of my little nephews. If you are at Gunville at Christmas, I hold out Hopes to myself that I shall be able to pass a week with you there. I mentioned to you at Upcott a kind of Comedy that I had *committed*—to writing, in part. This is in the wind.

Wordsworth's second Volume of the *Ly. Ball.* will I hope and almost believe, afford you as unmingled pleasure as is in the nature of a collection of very various poems to afford to one individual mind. Sheridan has sent to *him* too, requesting him to write a Tragedy for Drury Lane. But W. will not be diverted by any thing from the prosecution of his great work.

I shall request permission to draw upon you shortly for 20*£*—but if it be in the least inconvenient to you, I pray you, tell me so—for I can draw on Longman, who in less than a month will owe me 60*£*, tho' I would rather not do it.

Southey's *Thalaba* in twelve books, is going to the Press. I hear his *Madoc* is to be *nonum-in-annum'd*.³ Besides these,

¹ Cf. Charles Lamb to Coleridge, dated August 26, 1800, *Letters of Charles Lamb*, W. C. Hazlitt (Bohn Library), 1886, i. 256.

² Derwent Coleridge was born September 14, 1800.

³ Southey's *Madoc* was published in 1804.

I have heard of four other Epic Poems—all in quarto ! a happy age this for tossing off an *Epic* or two !

Remember me with great affection to your Brother—and present my kindest respects to Mrs. Wedgewood. Your late governess wanted one thing which, where there is Health, is I think indispensable in the moral character of a young person—a light and cheerful Heart. She interested me a good deal ; she appears to me to have been injured by going out of the common way without any of that Imagination, which if it be a Jack o’Lanthorn to lead us out of that way is however—at the same time a Torch to light us whither we are going. A whole Essay might be written on the Danger of *thinking* without Images. God bless you, my dear Sir, and him who is with grateful and affectionate esteem

Your’s ever

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 79

To THOMAS N. LONGMAN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday, Dec. 15, 1800.

DEAR SIR

It gives me great pleasure that I am able to inform you, that the last sheet of the Lyrical Ballads is sent off—I have already commenced negociations for securing them a fair and honest Review—I should advise that 3 or 4 copies should be sent to different people of eminence : one to Mrs. Jordan ¹ (who intended to sing stanzas of the Mad Mother in Pizarro if she acted Cora again—) one to Mrs. Barbauld and one to Mr. Wilberforce ²—if you agree with me Mr. Wordsworth will write appropriate complimentary Letters with each. With neither of these has Mr. W. any acquaintance. I propose it only as likely to push the sale—of their

¹ Dorothea Jordan (1762-1816), the actress.

² William Wilberforce (1759-1833), the philanthropist, led the parliamentary struggle for the abolition of slavery.

ultimate and permanent success I have no doubt—I am especially pleased that I have contributed nothing to the second volume, as I can now exert myself loudly and everywhere in their favor without suspicion of vanity or self-interest.¹ I have written Letters to all my acquaintance whose voices I think likely to have any Influence. In all this I am guided, if I know my own heart, wholly and exclusively by my almost unbounded admiration of the poems—The second volume is indeed greatly superior to the first.

Now for myself. In Christmas week I shall be in London, and I will explain to you the delay in my manuscript; tho' indeed the explanation is short enough. After I had finished the work and written to you, I was convinced by a friend that a long account which I had given of the Illuminati would raise a violent clamour against me and my publisher—Yet I have said nothing but what I am afraid was the truth—at the same time Mr. Wordsworth who had been in a different part of Germany offered me the use of his Journal tho' not of his name—I immediately resolved to throw my work into Chapters instead of Letters, and substitute my friend's account of Germany farther south than I had been instead of the obnoxious Letters. This however would have taken so little time that you would have had the copy, within a week or ten days, at most later than the day appointed—but at that time a complaint seized my head and eyes, which made it impracticable for me even to read, and after a six weeks continuance, during which time I had in vain used Leeches, Blisters, and God knows what, it was carried off by six large Boils which appeared behind my ear down to my shoulder and which are not yet quite healed—I leave this place the day after Christmas Day, and you may depend on it that from the first of January to the printing of the last page your Printer shall not have to complain of an hour's delay.

¹ The second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* appeared in 1800; the poems Coleridge had contributed to the first edition (*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *The Foster-Mother's Tale*, *The Nightingale*, and *The Dungeon*) were included in the first volume; but the second volume was entirely Wordsworth's, partly because Coleridge was quite unable to finish *Christabel* for inclusion. (Cf. *Life*, 117 and note.)

Mrs. Coleridge and my two children are well. You will present my best respects to Mrs. Longman and believe me, dear Sir, with a great sense of your constant civility

Your obliged humble Servant

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 80

To the REV. F. WRANGHAM, Hunmanby, near Burlington.

[Original letter, Library of Owen D. Young.]

Greta Hall, Keswick.

December 19, 1800.

MY DEAR WRANGHAM

Rather than not answer your kind letter immediately, I have made up my mind to write but half a dozen Lines, as a sort of promissory Note. Wordsworth received your letter, and meant to have answered it immediately. I'll write to him *today*, quoth he. For you must understand, that *W.*, has innervated very vilely the good old *Common-Law* of Procrastination—instead of Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, it is To Day, To Day, and To Day, which I the more disapprove of, as it appears to me a tame Plagiarism from the Lie of the Taverns and Coffee Houses—"Coming this *instant*, your Honor!"—But obviously, he is a hardened offender in these sins of omission—and has so many claims of an elder Date to satisfy, that verily I believe he had a scruple of conscience against writing to *you*, lest he should give that to Pleasure which he had in so many instances refused to *Duty*. Wordsworth and I have never resided together—he lives at Grasmere, a place worthy of him, and of which he is worthy—and neither to Man nor Place can higher praise be given. His address is,

Grasmere, near Ambleside,
Westmoreland.

As to our literary occupations they are still more distant than our residences—He is a great, a true Poet—I am only a kind of a Metaphysician. He has but even now sent off the last sheet of a second Volume of his Lyrical Ballads.

I have ample House-room for you, and you shall have whenever you come a good bed, a good Dinner, a kind welcome, and as Alcaeus says ἡδὺν οἶνον ἡδυτέρως τε Μώσας¹—to which I may add, diviner Prospects than his Lesbos could boast. In truth, my Glass being opposite to the Window, I seldom shave without cutting myself. Some Mountain or Peak is rising out of the Mist, or some slanting Column of misty Sunlight is sailing across so that I offer up soap and blood daily, as an Eye-servant of the Goddess Nature. I shall be glad to see a Poem from you on so interesting a subject. Poor Godwin! I am told, it was a dull Tragedy damn'd—from whence you may conclude that it was a dam'd dull Tragedy—yet I liked it in it's unfinished state when I saw it in Manuscript— I have two fine little boys.

God bless you,

and S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. My House stands on the River Greta, which is a literal Translation of the word Cocytus

Nam'd from lamentation loud
Heard in the rueful stream

To griet [greet ?] is to lament aloud, and a is the masculine termination of the substantive.

LETTER 81

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum.]

Tuesday Night, January 7, 1801.

MY DEAR POOLE

.....

O me, my dear fellow! the notion of a Soul is a comfortable one to a poor fellow, who is beginning to be ashamed of his Body! For the last four months I have not had a fort-

¹ These words do not appear in Alcaeus.

² Coleridge here describes "a Rheumatic Fever" and its disagreeable after-effects on his system.

night of continuous health—bad eyes, swoln eye lids, boils behind my ears ! and heaven knows what ! From this year I commence a Liver by Rule—the most degrading, perhaps, of all occupations, and which, were I not a Husband and Father, I should reject, as thinking human life not worth it.

My visit to the South I must defer to the warm weather—the remaining months of the winter and the Spring I must give *totis viribus* to Health and Money. But for my illness I should have been so far beforehand with the world, that I should in all probability have been able to have maintained myself all this year—without drawing on the Wedgewoods, which I wished with a very fever of earnestness : for indeed it is gall to me to receive any more money from them, till I can point to something which I have done with an inward consciousness, that therein I have exerted the whole of my mind. As soon as my poor head can endure the intellectual and mechanical part of composition, I must immediately *finish* a volume which has been long due—this will cost me a month, for I must not attempt to work hard. When this is finished, I shall receive 70£ clear—which will not be sufficient by some pounds to liquidate my debts : for I owe 20£ to Wordsworth, 25£ to Shopkeepers and my Landlord in Keswick, and 25£ to Phillips,¹ the Bookseller (moneys received on the score of a work to be due for him—which I could do indeed in a fortnight and receive 25£ more ; but the fellow's name is become so infamous, that it would be worse than any thing I have yet done to appear in public as his Hack.) Besides these I owe about 30£, 17£ of it to you, and the remainder to Lamb—but these are of no pressing nature, whereas the above mentioned are imperious—After this work I shall publish my Tragedy, which I have greatly added to, and altered, under the title of a Poem ²—and likewise, and by itself, *Christabel*. These will fetch me 60£—and here ends the list of my immediate and certain Re-

¹ Sir Richard Phillips (1767-1840), author and bookseller, in 1796 had established the *Monthly Magazine*.

² Coleridge refers to *Orsorio*, but his plan to publish it did not materialize. A revised form of *Orsorio* (i.e. *Remorse*) was published in 1813.

sources. I have by me a Drama, and a sort of Farce¹—written wholly *for* the theatre, and which I should be ashamed of in any other view—work, written purposely vile—if aught good *should* come of them, it would set me at ease at once ; but that is but a Dream. The result of all this is (I am so dizzy in consequence of so long lying a bed that I do not know whether I write legibly in manner or intelligently in matter) that much as it may distress me, I must draw on Mr. Wedgewood—I do not know how much of this year's money I have anticipated—I hope not more than 40£—if so, I have 110£ coming. One thing I must request of you, that you will desire Mr. King to pay 15£ to Mrs. Fricker on my account—and I have written to Mr. Wedgewood to repay that sum to you. I have done this, because she is in immediate want of the money, and it saves the circuit of letters, and it [would] have been gross to have had the money sent to her immediately from Mr. Wedgewood. My Wife and children are well—Derwent is a fine fat little fellow, that very often looks just like your dear Mother. Hartley is a universal Darling—he seems to have administered Love Philtres to the whole town. God bless you, my dearest Poole ! I have scarce strength left to fold up the letter—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 82

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *Pneumatic Institution, Hotwells, Bristol.*

[Original letter. Royal Institution.]

Jan. 11, 1801.

MY DEAR DAVY

With legs astraddle and bebolster'd back,
Alack ! alack !

...² Somewhat more than 3 weeks ago I walked to Grasmere, and was wet thro'—I changed immediately—

¹ These works were probably never written. Certain dramatic fragments may be found in the British Museum, Add. MSS. 34,235.

² Coleridge again describes the "Rheumatic Fever" in the omitted passages. He details "a succession of Indispositions, inflamed eyes,

but still the next day I was taken ill, and by the Lettre de cachet of a Rheumatic Fever sentenced to the Bed-bastille—the Fever left me, and on Friday before last I was well enough to be conveyed home in a chaise—but immediately took to my bed again—a most excruciating pain on the least motion, but not without motion, playing Robespierre and Marat in my left Hip and the small of my back— . . . ¹—yet still my animal spirits bear me up, tho' I am so weak, that even from sitting up to write this note to you, I seem to sink in upon myself in a ruin, like a column of Sand, informed and animated only by a Whirl-blast of the Desart.

Pray, my dear Davy ! did you rectify the red oil which rises over after the spirit of Hartshorn is gotten from the Horn so as to make that animal oil of Diphelius ? and is it true what Hoffman asserts, that 15 or so drops will exert many times the power of opium both in degree and duration, without inducing any after fatigue ?

You say W's "last poem is full of just pictures of what human life ought to be"—believe me, that such scenes and such characters really exist in this country—the superiority of the small Estates-men, such as W. paints in old Michael, is a God compared to our Peasants and small Farmers in the South : and furnishes important documents of the kindly ministrations of local attachment and hereditary descent. Success, my dear Davy ! to Galvanism and every other ism and schism that you are about. Perge, dilectissime ! et quantum potes (potes autem plurimum) rempublican humani generis juva. Videtur *mihi* saltem alios velle—te vero posse—Interea a Deo optimo maximo iterum atque iterum precor ut Davy meus Davy, meum cor, meum caput, mea spes altera, vivat, ut vivat dire [dive ?] et feliciter ! Tui aman-tissimus

S. T. COLERIDGE.

swoln eye lids, boils behind my ear etc. etc.", and after the use of many medical terms remarks "how learned a Misfortune of this kind makes one."

¹ See note 2, p. 168.

LETTER 83

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. A few lines published *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 26-27; the passage quoted from Mrs. Robinson's letter is published in *Coleridge and Mrs. Mary Robinson*, E. L. Griggs, *Modern Language Notes*, Feb. 1930, p. 92; a few lines are published in *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (Campbell), 1893, 625.]

Sunday Night, February 1, 1801.

MY DEAR POOLE

It mingles with the pleasures of convalescence, with the breeze that trembles on my nerves, the thought how glad you will be to hear that I am striding back to my former health with manful paces. The Fluid is nearly, indeed almost wholly absorbed, and though I cannot sit up very long without lassitude and pains in my back, yet I can sit up every day longer than the Day before. I have begun to take Bark; and I hope, that shortly I shall look back on my long and painful illness only as a Storehouse of wild Dreams for Poems, or intellectual Facts for metaphysical speculation: Davy in the kindness of his heart calls me the Poet-philosopher—I hope, Philosophy and Poetry will not neutralize each other, and leave me an inert mass. But I talk idly. I feel, that I have power within me: and I humbly pray to the great Being, the God and Father who has bidden me “rise and walk” that he will grant me a steady mind to employ the health of my youth and manhood in the manifestation of that power. One week more of Repose I am enjoined to grant myself; and then I gird up my Loins, first, to disembarass my circumstances by fulfilling all my engagements, and then to a Work—O my dear, dear Friend! that you were with me by the fireside of my study here, that I might talk it over with you to the tune of this nightwind that pipes it's thin, doleful, climbing, sinking notes, like a child that has lost it's way and is crying aloud, half in grief and half in the hope to be heard by it's mother. But when your Ripping is over, you will come, or, at furthest, immediately after your hay harvest. Believe me, often and often in my walks amid these sublime landscapes I have trod the

ground impatiently, *irritated* that you were not with me. Poor dear Mrs. Robinson ! you have heard of her Death. She wrote me a most affecting, heart-rending letter a few weeks before she died, to express what she called her Death bed affection and esteem for me. The very last lines of her letter are indeed sublime.—“ My little cottage is retired and comfortable. There I mean to remain (if indeed I live so long) till Christmas. But it is not surrounded with the romantic scenery of your chosen retreat : it is not, my dear Sir ! the nursery of sublime thoughts—the abode of Peace—the solitude of Nature’s Wonders. O ! Skiddaw !—I think, if I could but once contemplate thy Summit, I should never quit the Prospect it would present till my eyes were closed for ever ! ” O Poole ! that that woman had but been married to a noble Being, what a noble Being she herself would have been. Latterly she felt this with a poignant anguish. Well !— !

O’er her pil’d grave the gale of evening sighs ;
And flowers will grow upon it’s grassy slope.
I wipe the dimming water from mine eyes—
E’en in the cold Grave dwells the Cherub Hope ! ¹

Our children are well—twenty times a week I see in little Derwent such a striking *look* of your dear Mother ! My love to Ward. I congratulate him on his Brother’s marriage. Have you received the 15*£* from Mr. Wedgewood ? he informed me that he would send it to you speedily. I received 25*£* from him, which I payed off immediately—and now that I am so near to Health, and shall be soon able to finish my engagements with Longman, I feel a repugnance at sending to him again for more money immediately. If it would [be] no inconvenience to you to let me have 20*£* for six weeks, you would make my mind easy—at that time I will either send you back this money myself, or write to Mr. Wedgewood to do so. But if it be inconvenient to you, feel no pain in telling me so—only write to me. I have found Phillips, *as* I told you, I believe ; and that the Fellow sent me an Attorney’s letter—it amused me exceedingly at first—

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 996.

but afterwards it made my heart ache, thinking of poor Cruikshanks. God bless you, my dear Friend—and
S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 84

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 30-32.]

Friday, February 13, 1801.

MY DEAREST FRIEND

I received your letter with the Bill inclosed this evening. If you come in the beginning of May, you will make it joyous as an Italian month to me. Only let it be in the middle of May, that the leaves may be all out. I shall begin to look at the Lake and the encamped host of mountains with a new interest—"that will delight him." God ever bless you, my dear dear Friend.

I received from J. W. the same account as your's! Nearly in the same words—*Inter nos*, I believe Mr. Sharpe¹ to be a very shorteared Man, and as to Mackintosh²—Lord have pity upon that metaphysics, of which he is a competent Judge—I attended 5 of his lectures—such a wretched patch work of plagiarisms from Condillac—of contradictions, and blunders, in matter of fact, I never heard from any man's mouth before. *Their* opinion weighs as nothing with me. But I take T. Wedgewood's own opinion, his own convictions, as *strong* presumptions that he has fallen upon some very valuable Truths—some he stated but only in short hints to me; and I *guess* from these, that they have been noticed before, and set forth by Kant, in part and in part by Lambert. I *guess* that it will be so; yet I wish, they may not be, both for the sake of the Truth, and because if they should be, it

¹ Richard Sharp (1759-1835), a banker and later a Member of Parliament, who was known as "Conversation Sharp." Probably Sharp's intimacy with Mackintosh explains Coleridge's slighting reference.

² Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832), the philosopher, married in 1798 Catherine Allen, a sister-in-law of Coleridge's benefactors. There was considerable rivalry between Mackintosh and Coleridge, who never came to have a high regard for Mackintosh. Mrs. Sandford carefully avoided printing the more outspoken of Coleridge's remarks.

would damp his spirits. I have been myself *thinking* with the most intense energy on similar subjects. I shall shortly communicate the result of my Thoughts to the Wedgewoods, but previously shall send off some letters which I have only to copy out for T. Wedgewood respecting Locke and Descartes, and likewise concerning the supposed Discovery of the Law of Association by Hobbes.

Since I have been at Keswick I have read a great deal, and my reading has furnished me with many reasons for being exceedingly suspicious of *supposed discoveries* in metaphysics. My dear dear Poole! Plato and Aristotle were great and astonishing geniuses, and yet there is not a Presbyterian Candidate for a convention but believes that they were mere children in knowledge compared with himself and Dr. Priestley and Rees,¹ etc.

My letters to the Wedgewoods shall be copied out and sent you, in the course of the next week. I do not think, they will entertain you very much, those already written, I mean, for they are crowded with dates and quotations, and relate chiefly to the character of Mr. Locke,² whom I think I have *proved* to have gained a reputation to which he had no honest claim; and Hobbes³ as little to the reputation, to which T. Wedgewood, and after him Mackintosh, have laboured to raise him. But all this *inter nos*. Wordsworth has received answers from all but Mr. Fox—all respectful and polite, but all written *immediately* on the receipt of the Poems, and consequently expressing no opinion. His reputation as a Poet is high indeed in London.

Mr. Sharpe told me of his Friend Rogers, the Booby that *let* the Pleasures of Memory—"I look upon him, Mr. Coleridge! as a sweet *Enamel* Poet." Change of ministry interests *me* not. I turn at times half reluctantly from Leibnitz or Kant even, to read a smoking new newspaper—such a *purus putus* metaphysician am I become. Mrs. Coleridge

¹ I presume Coleridge refers to Abraham Rees (1743-1825) the Encyclopaedist, who was well known as a dissenter.

² For Coleridge's opinion of Locke, see *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, i. 31 n.

³ Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). His *Leviathan* was published in 1651.

has been ill with an ulcerated throat, but is bettering. I am feebler *far*, than I could wish to be, but the weather is against me. Mrs. C. desires her kindest, very kindest love to your mother, and she sends her love to Ward, and begs and intreats of him (if your mother is not disposed to write)—that he will immediately write her a letter full of news, Stowey news, of Mr. and Mrs. Rich, of the Chesters,¹ of everybody and everything. She hates the sight of your nasty letters, with not a word for a woman to read in them. But Ward is a bad hand. Do get your dear mother to write.

O May, best month of all the year !

Derwent is going to be inoculated with the Cow-Pox. He is a beautiful boy. And Hartley—I could fill sheets about him. God love my dearest Friend,

and S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 85

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum.]

*Keswick,
Sunday, July 7, 1801.²*

MY DEAREST POOLE

I had written you a letter some days ago, which by accident was not sent to the post—its purport chiefly was to desire you to desire Mr. King to pay Mrs. Fricker 10*£* in my name ; which sum Mr. Wedgewood will remit to you the first time he writes. I wrote to him on Wednesday night last, requesting him so to do. I adopt this mode of conveying the money to Mrs. F. first to save the expense of two double letters, as I must divide the note in order to send it with certain safety, and four shillings is a heavy Drawback from 10*£*—and secondly, from the great difficulty of procuring Bank of England Bills in this County. Nobody here will take them—they call them “ swindling notes ”—the home business is carried on by the Bank Paper of the chief Towns

¹ It was John Chester who saw so much of Coleridge in Germany.

² July 7, 1801, was on Tuesday.

in this and the adjoining Counties, and the London business by means of Drafts.

The remaining part of my letter was written in so flowing a spirit that I am glad it was delayed long enough for me to see and destroy it. On Wednesday Evening I received a friendly letter from Jos. Wedgewood. He had seen a letter of mine to Tobin, written for the purpose of preventing him and a friend of his from paying me a visit this summer : (a month's visit) the reason I had assigned was the uncertainty of my remaining in this country after this month, as I was determined to go to the Azores in the very first Vessels, and winter there, if I could get the moneys necessary for *me to go* with, and for my *wife and Babes* to be left behind with. Mr. Wedgewood says—"I shall be very glad to hear from you, when you have strength and spirits to write, as I suppose some plan must be settled as to your annuity. In the mean time I enclose a draft of 50*£*, as I think we are in your debt." This 50*£* has, I doubt not, left me their debtor, as far as respects this year's annuity. It has enabled [me] to pay up to the present hour all our half yearly and quarterly Keswick Bills, rent, etc., etc.—and as much of the remainder of the Debt transferred from Longman to Wordsworth as is sufficient, for W's present necessities. Within a trifle, 4 or 5*£* perhaps, *my Household* will go on very smoothly and easily till Christmas when I shall be able to draw again.

I wrote to Tobin in the first gloomy moments of a sudden and severe Relapse : on the three following nights I had three sharp paroxysms of decided Gout which left me in apparent health and good spirits : and under these influences I wrote a very cheerful answer to Mr. Wedgewood, and informed him, that I had postponed, and I hoped relinquished the scheme of passing the Winter at St. Michael's ; but that I meant to try a course of Horse Exercise. Within two Hours after I had dispatched this letter I was again taken ill with fever and the most distressing stomach-attacks—on Friday Evening and night I was very ill—only a little better on Saturday—and I am still very sick and *somewhat* sad. I can bear pain, my dear Poole ! I can bear even violent pain

with the meek patience of a woman ; but nausea and giddiness are far worse than pain—for they insult and threaten the steadiness of our moral Being and there is one thing yet more deplorable than these—it is the direful Thought of being inactive and useless. Nine dreary months—and oh me ! have I had even a fortnight's full and continuous health ? I have hardly gained the Rock, ere a new wave has overtaken and carried me back again. When I am well and employed as I ought to be, I cannot describe to you how independent a Being I seem to myself to be. My connection with the Wedgewoods I feel to be an honor to myself, and I hope, and *almost feel*, that it will hereafter be even something like an honor to them too—but—oh Poole ! you know my heart and I need not reverse the picture. Now what am I to do ? Mr. Wedgewood says “ From all I have heard of the part of England where you are, I think it is very likely that you may have suffered from the wetness of the climate, and that you might probably derive great benefit from merely changing your place of abode in England.” To this I make two remarks which I shall make into two paragraphs—a trick, I have learnt by writing for Booksellers at so much *per sheet*. Blank spaces are a Relief to the Reader's eye and the Author's Brain—and the Printers too call them *Fat*.

First then, that beastly Bishop, that blustering Fool, Watson, a native of this vicinity, a pretty constant Resident here, and who has for many years kept a Rain-gage, considers it as a vulgar Error that the climate of this County is particularly wet. He says, the opinion originates in this—that the Rain here falls more certainly in certain months, and these happen to be the months, in which the Tourists visit us. William Coates said to me at Bristol—“ Keswick, Sir ! is said to be the rainiest place in the Kingdom—it always rains there, Sir ! I was there myself three Days, and it rained the whole of the Time.” Men's memories are not much to be relied on in cases of weather ; but judging from what I remember of Stowey and Devon, Keswick has not been, since I have been here, wetter than the former, and not so wet as Devonshire.

Secondly, whither am I to go? Nota bene, Poole! I have now no furniture: and no means whatever to buy any. Giving the requisite and merited attention to this circumstance, I say, I live cheaper here than I could do any where in England. I have delightful Prospects, a heavenly Grounds for the children, a solicitously kind neighbor in my Landlord—and a mother to Hartley in his Housekeeper. But all this out of the question, I say, I live *cheaper* here than I could in any part of the Kingdom. But then I find, alas! that I cannot endure the climate—but then I have not an atom of Belief, nor the most trifling Reason for believing, that the Climate in any other part of the Kingdom is one whit better for me—*excepting perhaps* some part of Cornwall. And how am I to get hither? Every one has said to me—I hope, you may recover your health merely by living in Devonshire or Cornwall without going abroad. I have always answered thus—Going abroad—going out of the Kingdom, etc. are terrible *words*—but what is the thing itself? I can go, by myself, to St. Michael's for 5 guineas, and live there for 20*£* a year—and if I send for my wife and children, the expense will be exactly in the same proportions—and the carriage of my Books will cost nothing additional—But if I go to the Coast of Devon or Cornwall, by myself, the coasting voyage is too dangerous for me to go by sea, and it is intolerably tedious and uncertain; if I go by Land, I must often halt a day or two on the road, and it cannot cost me so little as 20 guineas—and as to *living*, Lord have mercy upon me! if I go with my wife and children, the expense will be in the same proportion—and the carriage of my Books will half ruin me!—Add to this, that at St. Michael's I have not only an exceedingly cheap country, a heavenly country to look at, and Baths specific in the cure of my Disease, but I can gain twice as much as my voyage there and back, and my maintenance by writing, without half the effort which I am now using, what I have seen and noticed. I have therefore made up my mind to go and see the place at the end of this month, if I can—and now all I have to do is to think *how* I can do it. I could go if I had 30*£* for myself, and 10*£* to

leave with Mrs. Coleridge. This 40*£* I think I could raise from the Booksellers, without injuring my reputation by giving out unfinished works, merely in advance, provided I could get any one to be my Security for the repayment of the money in case that Death or Disease should occasion a non-performance of my engagement. To the Wedgewoods I will not apply—it would look like borrowing money upon my annuity—and I am, and I ought to be, feverishly fearful and delicate with regard to my pecuniary connections with them, having yet done nothing in evidence that they did not do a hasty and imprudent thing in having done so much for me. God bless them ! I am sure, I think often of them with a grateful and affectionate heart—

Neither do I apply to you—partly because I am vexed that I have not yet been able to repay you the *£*37 I already owe, and partly because I know how manifold and vexatious your pecuniary responsibilities already are—and am somewhat too proud willingly to force you to think of *me*, at the time you are thinking of poor ——— and ——— [sic]. I shall apply, therefore elsewhere, if I can think of anybody else—if not, I will try my rhetoric to persuade some bookseller to advance the sum without security—and not till that have failed, shall I ask you. Consider this letter therefore only as one giving you occasion for writing to advise me, if you have any advice to offer, or any reason for believing that I am wrong in my present determination. Something I must do, and that speedily for Body and Soul are going—Soul is going with Body, and Body is going into Dung and Crepitus—with more of the latter than the former. Wordsworth mentioned to me that he meant to write to you. I told him, I should certainly write myself, and was about to state what I meant to say—but he desired me not to do it, that he might write with his opinions unmodified by mine. *We* are all well but *I*. Best love to your mother. God for ever bless you, my dear Poole, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 86

To the REV. F. WRANGHAM.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Gallow Hill,¹ Aug. 2, 1801

DEAR WRANGHAM

I arrived here on Friday afternoon. Such is the state of my health that I could not venture to ride over to Hunmanby, uncertain whether or no you are at home, but I cannot satisfy myself unless some way or other I convey to you my wish for the enduring happiness of yourself and those who are dearest to you. I shall remain here four or five days, or a week at the farthest, as Southey will at the conclusion of that time be (with Mrs. Southey) on his road to Keswick. Have you any thoughts of visiting the Lakes this autumn? I need not say how happy we of Keswick and Grasmere shall be to give you the welcome in our own names and in that of Lady Nature. Wordsworth at least can introduce you to all her best things in all her mollissima tempora, for few men can boast, I believe, so intimate an acquaintance with her Ladyship.

Believe me, dear Wrangham, yours sincerely

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 87

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, Kingsdown Parade, Bristol.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Bishop's Middleham, Wednesday, August 11, 1801.²

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I am glad that Longman played the Jew with you. Do not, whatever you do, do not send Madoc hastily out of your hands. I have much (and I believe some things of importance) to talk over with you respecting that poem. I cannot but believe that it will stand unrivalled in its own

¹ Where Mr. George Hutchinson, brother of Mrs. Wordsworth, then Miss Hutchinson, was tenant to the late Richard Longley.

² August 11, 1801, was on Tuesday.

kind, and that a very noble kind. I am *anxious* about that poem. *Do not write for Stuart*. Hamilton is bad enough. Sdeath is there nothing you can translate, to wit, anonymously? I much wish it were possible to bring your mother with you. Change and cheerfulness and rest—they are the physicians. I met two lines in an old German Latin Book which pleased me—

Si tibi deficiant Medici, Medici tibi fiant
Haec tria : mens hilaris, requies, moderata diaeta.

What you say of Davy impressed me, melancholied me. After I had written what I wrote to you concerning him, and had sent off my letter, a reproof rose up in my heart, and I said to myself—O when wilt thou be cured of the idle trick of letting thy wishes make romances out of men's characters? I had one very affecting letter from Davy, soon after his arrival in London—and in this he complained in a deep tone of the ill effect which perpetual analysis had on his mind. I for my part never did think his sphere of utility extended by his removal to London; and I think those most likely to be *permanently* useful also must cherish their best feelings.

Know thy own self and reverence the Muse! ¹

What a thing, what a living thing is not Shakespeare—and in point of real utility I look on Sir Isaac Newton as a very puny agent compared with Milton—and I have taken some pains with the comparison and disputed with transient conviction for hours together in favour of the former. However you are right as an oracle when you add—we are all well in our way. I have seen no new books except Godwin's ² which I met with by accident—and think of as precisely as you do. I was so much delighted with all the rest of the pamphlet that I could have myself pulled his nose for that loathsome and damnable passage.

Dr. Fenwick at Durham dissuaded me from bathing in the *open sea*—he thought it would be fatal to me. I came out all

¹ Coleridge implies that this quotation is from Shakespeare. I do not find it.

² Godwin's *Thoughts occasioned by . . . Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon*, 1801.

at once on the beach, and had faith in the Ocean. I bathed regularly, frolicked in the billows, and it did me a proper deal of good. When I received your letter this morning, I was packing up to go to Keswick and I returned from Scarborough last night—but now I shall stay a week at Dimsdale and bathe twice a day in the sulphur baths there. They work wonders. God bless you. I long to behold you. Love to Edith. On my first Emersion I composed a few lines which will please you as a symptom of convalescence—for alas ! it is a long [time] since I have cropt a flowering weed on the sweet Hill of Poesy.

1.

God be with thee, gladsome Ocean !
How gladly greet I thee once more—
Ships and waves and endless motion
And Life rejoicing on thy shore.

2.

Gravely said the sage Physician,
To bathe me on thy shores were death ;
But my soul fulfill'd her mission,
And lo ! I breathe untroubled breath.

3.

Fashion's pining Sons and Daughters
That love the city's gilded sty,
Trembling they approach thy waters
And what cares Nature if they die ?

4.

Me a thousand Loves and Pleasures
A thousand Recollections bland
Thoughts sublime and stately measures
Revisit on thy sounding strand—

5.

Dreams, the soul herself forsaking,
Grief-like Transports, boyish mirth,
Silent Adorations making
A blessed shadow of this earth !

6.

O ye Hopes that stir within me,
 Health comes with you from above
 God is with me, God is in me,
 I cannot die, if Life be Love !¹

[no signature or ending]

LETTER 88

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Oct. 21. 1801—The day after my birthday²—29 years of age ! *Who on earth can say that without a sigh !*

DEAR SOUTHEY

You did not stay long enough with us to *love* the mountains and this wonderful vale. Yesterday the snow fell—and today—O that you were here—Lodore full—the mountains snow-crested, misty, howling weather ! After your arrival I move southward in the hopes that warm rooms and deep tranquillity may build me up anew, and that I may be able to return in the Spring without the necessity of going abroad. I propose to go with you and Edith to London and then to Stowey—or Wedgewood's as circumstances direct. My knee is no longer swoln, and this frosty weather agrees with me—but O Friend ! I am sadly shattered. The least agitation brings on bowel complaints, and within the last week *twice* with an ugly symptom—namely of sickness even to vomiting—and Sara—alas ! we are not suited to each other.³ But the months of my absence I devote to *self-discipline*, and to the attempt to draw her nearer to me by a regular development of all the sources of our unhappiness—then for another trial *fair* as I hold the love of good men dear to me—*patient* as I myself love my own dear children. I

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 359-360. This version of the poem differs considerably from the published version.

² Coleridge was born on Oct. 21, 1772 (see *Life*, 1), not October 20th as he says.

³ This is the first of many references to Coleridge's domestic infelicity.

will go believing that it will end happily—if not, if our mutual unsuitableness continues, and (as it assuredly will do, if it continue) increases and strengthens—why then, it is better for her and my children that I should live apart, than that she should be a widow and they orphans. Carefully have I *thought thro'* the subject of marriage and deeply am I convinced of its indissolubleness. If I separate, I do it in the earnest desire to provide for her and them, that while I live she may enjoy the comforts of life and that when I die, something may have been accumulated that may secure her from degrading dependence. When I least love her, then most do I feel anxiety for her peace, comfort and welfare. Is she not the mother of my children? And am I the man not to know and feel this? Enough of this. But dear Southey! much as we differ in our habits, you do possess my esteem and affection in a degree that makes it uncomfortable to me not to tell you what I have told you. I once said, that I *missed* no body. I only enjoyed the *present*. At that moment my heart misgave me, and had no one been present I should have said to you—that you were the only exception—for my mind is full of visions and you had been so long connected with the fairest of all fair dreams, that I feel your absence more than I enjoy your society: tho' that I do not enjoy your society so much, as I anticipated that I should do, is wholly or almost wholly owing to the nature of my domestic feelings, and the fear or the consciousness that you did not and could not sympathize with them. Now my heart is a little easy—God bless you!

Dear Davy! If I have not overrated his intellectual powers, I have little fear for his moral character—

Metaphysician! Do, Southey, keep to your own most excellent word (for the insertion of which you deserve a pension far more than Johnson for his Dictionary) and always say *Metapothecaries*. There does not exist the instance of a *deep* metaphysician who was not led by his speculations to an austere system of morals. What can be more austere than the ethics of Aristotle? than the system of Zeno, St. Paul, Spinoza (in the ethical books of his ethics) Hartley, Kant and

Fichte. As to Hume, were he not—*ubi non fur, ibi stultus*, and often thief and blockhead at the same time? It is not *thinking* that will disturb a man's morals or confound the distinctions which to *think makes*. But it is *talking, talking, talking* that is the cause of the poison. I defy Davy to *think* half of what he *talks*; if indeed he talk what has been attributed to him. But I must see with my own eyes, and hear with my own ears. Till then I will be to Davy what Max was to Wallenstein. Yet I do agree with you that chemistry tends in its present state to turn its priests into sacrifices. The way in which it does it (this however is an opinion that would make Rickman¹ laugh at me if you told it to him) is this—it prevents or tends to prevent a young man from falling in love. We all have obscure feelings, that must be connected with something or other—the miser with a guinea—Lord Nelson with a blue ribbon, Wordsworth's old Molly with her washing tub—Wordsworth with the hills, Lakes and trees, (all men are poets in their way, tho' for the most part their ways are *darned bad ones*). Now Chemistry makes a young man associate these feelings with inanimate objects—and that without any moral revulsion, but on the contrary with complete self-approbation, and his distant views of benevolence or his sense of immediate beneficences attach themselves either to man as the whole human race, or to man, as a sick man, as a painter, as a manufacturer etc., and in no way to man as a husband, son, brother, daughter, wife, friend etc., etc. That to be in love is simply to confine the feelings prospective of animal enjoyment to one woman is a gross mistake—it is to associate a large proportion of all our obscure feelings with a real form. A miser is *in love* with a guinea, and a virtuous young man with a woman, in the same sense without figure or metaphor. A young poet may do without being in love with a woman—it is enough if he loves—but to a young chemist it would be salvation to be

¹ John Rickman (1771-1840), the friend of Charles Lamb, "had a profound admiration for Coleridge's genius, and an entire contempt for his character" (*Life and Letters of John Rickman*, 1911, Orlo Williams, 7). Rickman was clerk assistant in the House of Commons, and perhaps too practical to have much toleration for Coleridge.

downright romantically in love—and unfortunately so far from the poison and antidote growing together, they are like the wheat and Barberry.

You are not the first person who has sought in vain for Mole and Mulla—I shall end this letter with a prayer for your speedy arrival and a couple of Sapphic verses translated on my way from Stolberg— You may take your oath for it it was no admiration of the thought or the poetry that made me translate them—But now I think of it—no I will pursue my first thought.

*To the Will of the Wisps.*¹

Lunatic Witch-fires ! Ghosts of Light and Motion !
Fearless I see you weave your wanton dances
Near me, far off me—You that tempt the Trav'ler
Onward and onward.

Woing, retreating, till the Swamp beneath him
Groans ! and 'tis dark ! This woman's will—I know it !
Learnt it from *thee*, from *thy* perfidious glances,
Black-eyed Rebecca !

It is more poetical than the original, of which this is a literal translation—still play juggling deceiver, still play thy wanton dances, Fugitive Child of vapor, that fervently tempted onward the wandering feet, this coyly fleeted at length beguiles into ruin. These maiden wiles I know them, learnt them all out of the blue eyed fickle Nais.

Heaven bless you—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 979-980.

LETTER 89

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 71-72. The excellent passage on Mackintosh is there omitted. For details of the slight misunderstanding between Poole and Coleridge, to which the beginning of this letter refers, see *op. cit.*, ii. 70-71.]

October 21, 1801.

MY DEAR POOLE

Was my society then *useless* to you during my abode at Stowey? Yet I do not remember, that I ever once offered you *advice*! If indeed under this word you chuse to comprehend all that free communication of thought and feeling, which distinguished our intercourse, I have nothing to do but to subscribe to your *meaning*, referring you to the Dictionary for the better wording thereof. By the "quiet influences of the great Being" I wished to convey all that all things do from natural impulse, rather than direct and prospective Volition: not that I meant to interdict the latter—on the contrary, in that very letter I felt it my duty to give you *plump advice*; nay, I admit that man is an *advising* animal, even as he is a concupiscent one— Now as Religion has directed it's main attacks against Concupiscence, because we are too much inclined to it, so does Prudence against *Advice*-giving, and for the same reason. In short, I meant no more than that it is well to have a general *suspicion* of ourselves in the moment of an inclination to advise—this suspicion, not as a ham-stringer to cripple, but as a curb-rein to check. As to myself, advice from almost anybody gives me pleasure, because it informs me of the mind and heart of the adviser—but from a very, very dear Friend it has occasionally given me great pain—but, so help me Heaven, as I *believe* at least that I speak truly—on *his* account alone—or *if* on my own, on my own only as a disruption of that sympathy, in which Friendship has it's being. A thousand people might have advised all that you did, and I might have been pleased; but it is the *you, you* part of the Business that afflicted me—tho' by what figure of speech any part of my

letter could be called outrageous, I can discover by the science of metaphysics, rather than by any hitherto published Art of Rhetoric. And here ends, I trust, the controversial—from which I have seldom seen much good come even in conversation—and never anything but evil when letters have been the vehicle.

I will come to you as soon as I can get the money necessary. There are a few bills here, which must be payed before I can leave Mrs. Coleridge with comfort, to the amount of 10*£* perhaps; I must leave her 5*£*; and my own Journey will cost me 10*£*. Any *part* of this money, that you can spare for the space of *four months*, I should be glad to receive from you—and the rest, I will borrow from Pinney¹—as soon as I know of his arrival at Temerton. I have very particular Reasons for not anticipating any part of my next year's annuity by any draft on the Mr. Wedgewoods.

Mackintosh, (who is a large tall man) spent two days with me at Keswick, and was very entertaining and pleasant. He is every inch the Being, I had conceived him to be, from what I saw of him at Cote House. We talked of all and every thing—on some very affecting subjects, in which he represented himself by words as affected; on some subjects that called forth his verbal indignation—or exultation: but in no one moment did any particle of his face from the top of his forehead to the half of his neck, *move*. His face has no *lines* like that of a man—no softness, like that of a woman—it is smooth, *hard*, motionless—a *flesh-mask*! as to his conversation, it was all uncommonly well-worded: but not a thought in it worthy of having been worded at all—He *was* however entertaining to me *always*; and to all around him then chiefly, when he talked of Parr,² Fox,³ Addington,⁴ etc. etc. When I asked him concerning Davy—he answered

¹ John Pinney, the owner of Racedown, who had loaned Racedown Lodge to William and Dorothy Wordsworth in 1797.

² Samuel Parr (1747-1825) was a conspicuous political writer, who was engaged in a literary quarrel with William Godwin.

³ Charles James Fox (1749-1806), the statesman.

⁴ Henry Addington (1757-1844, first Viscount Sidmouth) was at this time First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of Exchequer.

Oh ! little Davy—Dr. Beddoes' Eleve, you mean ? This was an excellent trait of character.

The Irish Chancellor's name is *Corry*,¹ not Curry.

We, i.e. Wordsworth and myself, regard the Peace as necessary, but the Terms as most alarming.

My children are well—and I am better. My knee is quite gone down—and the frosty air has greatly improved my general health. But a fit of Rain, or a fit of Grief, undoes in three hours what 3 weeks had been doing. I am a crazy crazy machine !

God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

What did you mean by my being “ the sport of the capricious advice of the most capricious ? ” It was quite an enigma to me. N.B. I never received a double letter from Mr. Wedgewood that was not charged *single*, nor a single letter from you that was not charged *double*. Yesterday was my Birth day—29 years of age ! O that I could write it without a sigh—or rather without occasion for one !

LETTER 90

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday night, November 9, 1801.

DEAR SOUTHEY

The thorn Mr. Edmundson believes to be still in my leg—the wound does not heal—or in the damn'd Scotch-English of the present day—*heals not*. But I leave this place to-morrow morning for Enesmere, Mr. Clarkson's² residence whither Mrs. Coleridge and my beloved children are already gone. Whether I leave Enesmere Wednesday or Friday, I can not say—Friday is the latest day. I wish you immediately to write a penny post letter to Stuart (No. 335 Strand, London) informing S. this, and that I have received his letter, and that he will be the second person I shall call

¹ Isaac Corry (1755-1813).

² Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846), the Quaker philanthropist, was active in the movement for the abolition of slavery.

on, *meaning* you for the first. Love to Edith. Hartley, was breeched last Sunday, and looks far better than in his petticoats. He ran to and fro in a sort of dance to the jingle of the load of money, that had been put in his breeches pockets ; but he did[!][not] roll and tumble over and over in his old joyous way. No ! it was an eager and solemn gladness, as if he felt it to be an awful oera in his life ! O bless him ! bless him ! bless him ! If my wife loved me, and I my wife, half as well as we both love our children, I should be the happiest man alive—but this is not—will not be !

Your's affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 91

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Four lines published, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 73.]

Monday, Dec. 14, 1801.

MY DEAR POOLE

That I *ought* to have written to you a month ago, I feel about as strongly as it is possible you can feel. But London has upset me—it is all buz buz buz with my poor head—and like a creature robbed of his free agency I do what I *must* not what I *would*— I am writing for the Morning Post—and reading in the old Libraries for my curious metaphysical work—but I hate London and my intention is in a week's time to go to Gunville, and from thence in a few days to proceed to you with Tom Wedgewood—who spoke of you to me with an enthusiasm of Friendship that surprized me and brought such a gush of Tears into my eyes that I had well nigh made a fool of myself in the Streets. I am better than I could expect—and would so much rather talk with you than write to you, that I am right glad that what I could write I shall soon be able to talk. It would be no unpleasant subject for a day-dream—Davy, you, and I going into France together— God bless you. My best remembrances to Ward.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 92

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE.

[From the original letter in the possession of the Rev. G. H. B. Coleridge. This fragment is all that remains of the original. Most of Coleridge's letters to his wife, which are extant, have been badly mutilated. I have ventured to include this fragment for what it shows of Coleridge's attempt to solve his domestic difficulties by an analysis of his own character and that of his wife.]

[1802.]

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—as to what is thought or said of me by persons, whom I do not particularly esteem or love, and by whom I am not esteemed or loved. 4. An independence of, and contempt for, all advantages of external fortune, that are not immediately connected with bodily comforts, or moral pleasures. I love warm Rooms, comfortable fires, and food, books, natural scenery, music, etc. ; but I do not care what *binding* the Books have, whether they are dusty or clean—and I *dislike* fine furniture, handsome cloathes, and all the ordinary symbols and appendages of artificial superiority—or what is called, *Gentility*. In the same spirit, I dislike, at least I seldom like, Gentlemen, gentlemanly manners, etc. I have no Pride, as far as Pride means a desire to be *thought* highly of by others—if I have any sort of Pride, it consists *in an indolent* So much for myself—and now I will endeavour to give a short sketch of what appears to be the nature of your character. As I seem to exist, as it were, almost wholly within myself, in *thoughts* rather than in *things*, in a particular warmth felt *all* over me, but chiefly felt about my head and breast ; and am connected with *things without* me by the pleasurable sense of their immediate Beauty or Loveliness, and not at all by my knowledge of the average value in the minds of people in general ; and with *persons without* me, by no ambition of their esteem, or of having rank and consequence in their minds, but with people in general by general kindness of feeling, and with my especial friends, by an intense delight in fellow-feeling, by an intense perception of the Necessity of *Like to Like* ; so you on the contrary exist almost wholly in the world *without*

you—the Eye and the Ear are your great organs, and you depend upon the eyes and ears of others for a great part of your pleasures

LETTER 93

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Kestwick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

No. 10 King's Street, Covent Garden.

Friday, Feb. 19, 1802.

MY DEAR LOVE

I dined with Southey yesterday, and incautiously [took] some greens and after that some apple Pie : and on my return to my Lodgings to Tea I was taken very ill with colic pains and Diarrhoea and when that went off, one of my old shivery fits came, I went to bed—had a bad night, but about 4 o'clock this morning I fell asleep and awoke at 9 pretty well. With this exception my Health has continued upon the mend, notwithstanding that the weather, dank and chill and foggy has been much against [me]. I attribute my amendment to the more tranquil state of my mind, and to the cheerfulness inspired by the thought of speedily returning to you in love and peace. I am sure, I drive away from me every thought but those of hope and the tenderest yearnings after you— And it is my frequent prayer, and my almost perpetual aspiration that we may meet to part no more, and live together as affectionate husband and wife ought to do.

I hope to leave town this day fortnight, so as to be with you on the seventh of March (the intervening time I shall be very busy), and if I write twice more, it will be as much as I shall be able to do. On Sunday I shall dine with Sir William Rush,¹ and on Monday evening I am to have a seat in their box for Mrs. Billington's² benefit. On Wednesday

¹ Sir William Beaumaris Rush, whose daughter, Laura, had recently married Basil Montagu.

² Mrs. Elizabeth Billington (1768-1818), called by the D. N. B. "the greatest singer England has ever produced", was at this time at the height of her fame, being under contract at both Covent Garden and Drury Lane.

I dine with Mr. Losh.¹ I shall exert all my influence to try to get George Fricker² a place in the India House, or some other of the public offices. Mary Lovell³ is to remain with the Southey's : in truth Edith is so exceedingly valetudinarian that some one or other seems always necessary. The great difference of expense will be in the travelling, and that will be very heavy.

Little Subligno (*alias* Underwood)⁴ fell in love with a fair Jewess, and went to Mr. D'Israeli, requesting his interference and offering immediately to become a convert to be circumcised. This is *nakedly* the fact without a word of decoration. I like Subligno hugely.

What do you say to a two years' residence at Montpellier, under blue skies and in a rainless air? In that case we would go to Liverpool and spend a week or ten days with the Cromptons, and from Liverpool to Bordeaux by sea. But I must first work. Southey would go that way to Lisbon, and would spend some months with us.

I wish you would think of something that I may bring Hartley. I have puzzled my head and cannot think of anything that will at once delight him and be durable. And my sweet Derwent ! My thin child and my fat child !

Remember me most kindly to Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Wilson and to Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson.⁵ I hope you receive the papers regularly. Are you not much affected by the highly sentimental cast of Mr. Ross' advertisement, and his wig-statue of the lively and much lamented Queen of Scots?

¹ Probably James Losh, the translator of Constant's treatise. See *Letters*, i. 219 n.

² George Fricker was Mrs. Coleridge's younger brother. Coleridge spent considerable effort trying to find him a post. George Fricker died of consumption in 1813.

³ Mary Lovell was the widow of Robert Lovell (who died in 1796) and the sister of Mrs. Coleridge and Mrs. Southey. She and her son made their home with the Southey's, and eventually settled with them at Keswick.

⁴ W. Underwood, the artist.

⁵ Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wilkinson were members of the Society of Friends at Yanwath. For Thomas Wilkinson, Coleridge modified certain passages in the *Friend*. See *Letters*, ii. 538 n.

If you wish me to bring anything from town, write me what and I will do it.

God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 94

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 79-80.]

Keswick,

Friday, May 7, 1802.

MY DEAR POOLE

I were sunk low indeed, if I had neglected to write to you from any lack of affection. I have written to no human being—which I mention, not as an excuse, but as preventive of any exaggeration of my fault. I have neither been very well, nor very happy ; but I have been far from idle, and I can venture to promise you that by the end of the year I shall have disburthened myself of all my metaphysics, etc.—and that the next year I shall, if I am alive and in possession of my present faculties, devote to a long poem. All my small poems are about to be published, as a second Volume,¹ and I mean to write few, if any, small poems hereafter. So much for myself—My children are well—Mrs. Coleridge is indisposed. Wordsworth is as well as he usually is ; and has written a considerable number of small poems. So much for us of the North.

And you are going to France, Switzerland, Italy !² Good go with you, and with you return ! I have, you well know, read nothing in French but metaphysical French ; of French books I know nothing—of French manners nothing—Wordsworth, to whom I shall send your letter to-morrow, may, perhaps have something to communicate he having been the same route. But what can you want ? I never saw you in any company in which you did not impress every one present as a superior man, and you will not be three days in

¹ This plan did not materialize.

² Poole was on the Continent from July to December, 1802.

France without having learnt the way of learning all *you* want. I advise one thing only—that before you go you skim over *Adam Smith*,¹ and that, in France, you look thro' some of the most approved writers on political economy—and that you keep your mind *intent* on *this*. I am sure, that it is a Science in its Infancy. Indeed, Science it is none—and you, I would fain anticipate, will be a benefactor to your species by making it so. Had I been you I would have gone through France and Switzerland, and returned by Paris—and not gone to Paris first. Such a crowd of eager Englishmen will be there at the same time with you, all pressing forward with their letters of Recommendation and you will find it difficult, perhaps, to remain disentangled by their society; to which, as a more important reason, I may add the superior skill and fluency in French and French manners—the naturalisation of look and tongue—which will enable you to converse with the *literati* of Paris on a better footing if you take Paris last.

I had offers made me by a London Bookseller of paying me the reasonable expenses, of a tour thro' France and Switzerland, on the condition, of a regular correspondence with him, which he was, of course, to publish, but tho' I had many strong domestic reasons impelling me to accept the offer, among others the benefit which my Health would have received from such a vacation from household Infelicity; yet I declined it—chiefly, but not altogether, from my ignorance of the French language— In Switzerland indeed they speak German; but there one uses one's eyes much more than one's Tongue or Ears— It would be droll if we had met—you not knowing my Scheme! What an Oera in our lives it would have been, to have passed thro' Switzerland together—You will (tho' I have little claim upon you, I confess) give me the delight of hearing from you; especially, I am solicitous to know the price of provisions and house rent in the South of France—nearest Switzerland. I am glad, you have received the German Picture²—there is one

¹ Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* was published in 1776.

² Evidently the portrait taken in Germany, which is reproduced in *Letters*, i. 262.

(I see by the Newspaper) in the Exhibition of me.¹ What it is, or where, I do not know, but I guess, it must be the miniature, which Hazlitt promised to Mrs. Coleridge ; but did not give to her, because I never finished my sittings. Mine is not a *picturesque* Face ; Southey's was made for a picture. Poor old Cruikshank !

Give my love to Ward—I will not let this post go off without this letter, dreary and vacant as it is—but I will write again, in a few days, when my heart is come back to me ; but not to leave such a Blank I will transcribe 2 pleasing little poems of Wordsworth's.

To a Butterfly.

Stay near me ! do not take thy flight !
A little longer stay in sight !
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my Infancy !
Float near me ! do not yet depart !
Dead Times revive in thee—
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art,
A solemn Image to my Heart,
My father's Family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the Days,
The time when in our childish plays
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chas'd the Butterfly.
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the Prey :—with leaps and springs
I follow'd on from Brake to Bush—
But she, God love her ! feared to brush
The Dust from off it's wings.²

The Sparrow's Nest.

Look, five blue eggs are gleaming there !
Few Visions have I seen more fair
Nor many Prospects of Delight
More pleasing than that simple sight !

¹ Hazlitt must have taken this portrait in 1798. It was apparently destroyed, or lost.

² Cf. *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford), 79.

I started, seeming to espy
 The Home and little Bed,
 The Sparrow's Dwelling which hard by
 My Father's House, in wet or dry,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

She look'd at it, as if she fear'd it,
 Still wishing, dreading to be near it ;
 Such Heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a Boy,
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears,
 And humble Cares, and delicate Fears,
 A heart, the fountain of sweet Tears ;
 And love, and thought, and Joy !¹

I ought to say for my own sake that on the 4th of April last
 I wrote you a letter in verse ; but I thought it dull and doleful
 —and did not send it—

God bless you, dear Friend and

S. T. C.

LETTER 95

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Keswick.

June 3, 1802.

MY DEAR BROTHER

I cannot let Mr. Froude² stay so long in this country
 without making him the Bearer of a letter to you from me,
 especially as he has given me so much cheerful information
 respecting you and yours, and the rest of my family. I pray
 God that you may always continue as well and happy, as you
 are prosperous. I assure you I was much affected by the

¹ Cf. *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford), 79. Coleridge's version of Wordsworth's poem is very different from the later one adopted by Wordsworth.

² Robert Hurrell Froude, at this time rector at Dartington, Devonshire, was the father of Richard Froude, Newman's friend.

zeal and enthusiasm with which Mr. Froude spoke of you and the Colonel. He seemed to feel as great a pride in your welfare and high character as if you had been *his* elder Brother instead of mine. Froude is indeed a very aimable, liberal and well-principled man : I sincerely hope that he will take with him from among us an accession to his real comfort.

As for myself, I have little to communicate. My health is much better than it was : tho' I have still very frequent attacks in my Bowels. They are a seditious crew, as I have need of the most scrupulous attention to my diet, to preserve them in any tolerable order. The children are both well, and Derwent is, as Froude will no doubt inform you, a thorough Coleridge in his whole cast. Hartley is more a thing *sui generis* ; but he is of a very docile disposition, and possesses that for which, I believe, I was somewhat remarkable, when a child, namely a memory both quick and retentive. Mrs. Coleridge is but poorly (however her disorder menaces me with no other event, I suspect, than that of a New Life). As to my studies they lie chiefly in Greek and German (Hartley made me laugh, the other day, by saying that Greek letters were English letters *dried up*). Then I have a great prepossession in favour of all ancient usages (τὰ ἀρχαῖα κρατέω) yet I cannot but conjecture that it would be found, both a feasible and a profitable scheme to teach Greek first. It seems wrong that a Language containing Books so much more numerous and valuable than Latin, and in itself so much more easy and perspicuous, should be confined as to the ready and fluent reading of it to a few *scholars*. This is owing solely to the teaching of the Greek thro' the medium of the Latin ; whereas according to my humble *vote*, both Greek and Latin should be taught with direct references to the English. What should we think of a schoolmaster who taught Italian through the medium of French ? But you are more likely to have formed correct opinions on this subject than I. I will only add that at the time of the first Greek dictionaries, there were not scholars enough in any one country to take off so

large an edition, as it was necessary to print (they were therefore compelled to render the Greek into the universal language). But the cause having so wholly ceased, it is pity but that the effect would likewise cease. Gilbert Wakefield was engaged and had made good progress in a Greek and English Lessons¹—What is become of it? I have not heard. I have read Vincent on the Greek—very—in my opinion: πάντα κόνις καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν. It is too dull to say πάντα γέλως—πάντα ὕπνος would be the aptest supplement.²

You have no doubt been interested in some measure in the French Concordant. I own I was surprised to find it so much approved by Clergymen of the Church. It appeared to me a wretched business—and first occasioned me to think accurately and with consecutive Logic on the force and meaning of the word *Established* Church, and the result of my reflections was very greatly in favour of the Church of England maintained as it at present is, and those scruples, which, if I mistake not, we had in common when I last saw you, as to the effects and scriptural propriety of the (supposed) alliance of Church and State were wholly removed. Perhaps you will in some measure perceive the general nature of my opinions when I say the Church of France at present ought to be called a *standing* Church in the same sense as one says a *Standing* Army. If the subject interested you I would willingly give you my opinions in full,³ with an historical account of the objections of Dissenters and of the Warburtonians system of Defence,⁴ which I rather dislike and

¹ Coleridge probably refers to Gilbert Wakefield's Greek Dictionary, which was never completed or published.

² Coleridge made some efforts to teach his son Hartley, Greek in the manner proposed above. See *Hartley Coleridge, His Life and Work*, Griggs, E. L., 1929, 41. For the fragments of a Greek grammar, see *Poems by Hartley Coleridge* (ed. by Derwent Coleridge), 1851, i. ccix-ccxviii.

³ Coleridge's theological opinions had changed visibly since 1798, when he was such a staunch Unitarian.

⁴ Coleridge refers to William Warburton's *The Alliance between Church and State* . . . 1736. H. N. Coleridge points out that there is some affinity between Coleridge's doctrines and Warburton's. See *On the Constitution of the Church and State . . . with notes by H. N. Coleridge*, 1839, xx-xxix.

suspect. Warburton's Faith was, I fear, of a very suspicious case. You will give my duty to my Mother, of whose health and good spirits I am delighted to hear ; to my Brother James, his wife and dear lively family you will remember me with fraternal affection ; and to Edward. Above all let me say how much I should be delighted to see your little ones and Mrs. G. Coleridge and if I had written half as often as I have thought of you (earnestly and seriously thought of you) you would have complained heavily of the Postage, and with good reason—

God bless you dear Brother,
and your's affectionately and gratefully
S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 96

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter was badly torn and mutilated, which explains the frequent use of brackets.]

Keswick. Thursday, July 1, 1802.

MY DEAR BROTHER

If you have had the same tempest at Lymington as has been playing its freaks among our Lakes and Mountains this whole day, the sea must have "shown off in grand style," as the Tourists phrase it. May you have occasion to exclaim with the younger Pliny "O mare ! O littus ! verum secretumque *μουσεῖον* quam multa invenitis, quam multa dictatis." ¹ It gave me great pleasure to hear from yourself a confirmation of what Mr. Froude had hinted to me—namely your intention of living hereafter for yourself—because I am well assured that by so doing you will, in some way or other, be living still for the benefit of others. You have purchased for yourself a high earthly reward, the Love and Honour of men whom you yourself have been the main instrument of rendering worthy to be themselves loved and honour'd. It seems as if there were something originally *amiss* in the constitution of all our family, if that can be in-

¹ Plin. *Epp.* I. 9, 6.

deed without presumption called "amiss" which may probably be connected intimately with our moral and intellectual characters ; but we all, I think, carry much passion, and a deep interest into the business of life ; and when to this is superadded, as in my Brother James' case great bodily fatigue, the organs of digestion will be soon injured. In weak men this in general produces affections of the Bowels, more or less painful : in strong men, spasmodic hypochondria, that will appear to have its headquarters in the stomach, and the secretories of Bile—and, I suspect this is my Brother's case, and that the only prescription is that of the old Latin Distich :

Si tibi deficiant Medici Medici tibi fiant
Haec tria, mens hilaris, requies, moderata diaeta.

The last is an old acquaintance of the Colonel's ; and the two former depend but little on our own arbitrament : so like advice in general, it is very true, but of little worth. I have been better of late, so much better, that I have hopes of becoming a tolerably healthy man. A Stout man I shall never be.

From the latter part of your letter I fear that I must have worded my letters to you inaccurately in what respected the change of sentiment in saying that I had no longer my former scruples respecting the *establishment* of the Church of England. I did not mean in any way to refer to its peculiar doctrines, or to the Church of England in particular. The change in my opinions applies equally to the Gothic Church antecedent to the revolution, and to the regular and parochial clergy of Spain and Portugal. The clergy are called, in a statute of Queen Elizabeth, the great, venerable third estate of the Realm ; that is to say that they and their property are an elementary part of our constitution, not created by our legislature, but really and truly antecedent to any form of Government in England, upon which any existing laws can be built. They and their property are recognised by the statutes, even as the common law frequently is, which was *bonâ fide* law, by the most sacred law, before the statutes, and recognised not for the purpose of having any additional

authority conferred on it, but for the removal of any ambiguities, and for the increasing of its publicity. The Church is not dependent on the Government, nor can the Legislature constitutionally alter its property without consent of the Proprietor, any more than it constitutionally could introduce an agrarian Law. Now this is indeed an Establishment—*res stabilita*. It has its own foundation ; whereas the present Church of France has no foundation of its own : it is a House of Convenience built on the sands of a transient legislature, and nowise differs from a standing Army. The Colonial Soldiers under the Roman Emperors were an *established* Army, in a certain sense, and so were the Timariots¹ of the Turks ; but the church of France is a *standing* Church, as its army is a *standing* army. It *stands*, and so does a Child's House of Cards, but how long it shall stand depends on the caprice of a few Individuals. This I hold to be indeed and in sad and solemn truth an anti-Christian union of the Kingdom of Christ with the Kingdom of this World, and in a less degree I look upon the manner in which the Dissenting Clergy are maintained as objectionable on the same grounds. Now herein and only herein lies the change in my opinions. When I was last with you and we walked on a *Sunday* evening with Mr. Southey,² toward the Head Wein, you expressed your dissent from Dr. Priestley's opinions and your disapprobation of the Spirit in which they had been made public ; but you said (and I had heard the same opinion of you before) that you did agree with him in thinking that Church Establishments had been prejudicial to Christianity. At that time I was wholly of the same mind, and so I remained till more reading and reflection removed that opinion which I [asserted to be]³ common at that time to yourself and to me. [With regard] to the particular Doctrines of the Church, or to any [change of opinion] I had

¹ " Third Class of the feudal Cavalry of the Ottoman Empire " (Note by E. H. Coleridge.)

² This visit was in September, 1799. See letter of Robert Southey, Sept. 3, 1799, *Letters of Robert Southey*, i. 81-83.

³ MS. torn out ; passages in brackets supplied by E. H. Coleridge.

no motive to speak. For I have always [told you] the truth and the whole truth when I have talked [with you] on this subject, and I could never discover any difference [between your] opinions and my own. I understand that in common [with all] the best and greatest men of the Church, with Bishop Taylor and Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Law (not to mention Paley and Jutin¹ because these are rightly or wrongly believed to be semi-Socinians) you regretted that so many scholastic terms and nice distinctions had been introduced into our articles of Liturgy. I do no more. I have read carefully the original of the New Testament, and have convinced myself that the Socinian and Arian hypotheses are utterly untenable; but what to put in their places I found nowhere distinctly revealed that I should dare to impose my opinion as an article of Faith on others: on the contrary, I hold it probable that the nature of the Being of Christ is left in obscurity, and that it behoves us to think with deep humility on the subject, and when we express ourselves, to be especially careful, on such a subject, to use the very words of Scripture. Dearest Brother! is there a serious Clergyman of all your acquaintance, who does not when he puts the question seriously to himself, wish that this *could* be, if it could be without too *dear* a purchase! But we know by sad experience that innovations are almost always dearly purchased, and I plead for no innovations, not even for the rash anathemas of the preface to the Athanasian Creed, neither do I either with my tongue or in my heart censure those who cling to the Church of England as they cling to their wives—first because there is great evil in change, and secondly because all moral and all political attachment must be grounded not on an immunity from defects and errors, but on the presence of Truth and Virtues practicable and suitable to us. My Faith is simply this—that there is an original corruption in our nature, from which

¹ This letter shows the trend of Coleridge's reading. He refers to Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667), to John Tillotson (1630-1694), to Edmund Law (1703-1787), and to William Paley (1743-1805). By Jutin he may have meant John Jortin (1698-1770).

and from the consequences of which, we may be redeemed by Christ—not, as the Socinians say, by his pure morals, or excellent example merely—but in a mysterious manner as an effect of his Crucifixion. And this I believe, not because I *understand* it ; but because I *feel* that it is not only suitable to, but needful for my nature, and because I find it clearly revealed. Whatever the New Testament says I believe—according to my best judgment of the meaning of the sacred writer.

Thus I have stated to you the whole of the change, which has taken place in me—which is, however, far from being the “first fruits” of my reverence for τὰ ἀρχαῖα κρατεῖν.

My kindest love to Mrs. G. Coleridge and your dear little ones. Mrs. C. . . .¹

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 97

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, King'sdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. The plan for a mutual occupancy of Greta Hall by the Coleridges and the Southey's did not yet materialize, and it was not until September, 1803, after the death of little Margaret Southey, that the Southey's migrated to the North, where they remained.]

*Keswick,
Sept. 2, 1802.*

DEAR SOUTHEY

I have received yours of 29th ult. and Sara has received Mary's, both this evening—and we are sadly perplexed. Edith and Mary cannot have counted the rooms accurately. Exclusive of the kitchen and back kitchen, there are ten rooms in the house—two very large, two tolerably large, and six small ones. The two very large ones would of course be your parlour and mine—the two next in size your bedroom and mine—there remain six—the two largest and pleasantest of which must be our two studios. Of the remaining four two will be the maids' rooms. Supposing we have but three servants—a cook and two Nursery-maids who must make the beds—and I hope and believe that these

¹ MS. torn.

will be enough—and suppose too that the infants sleep with their mothers—yet still three maids must have two rooms, first because their rooms will be small, and secondly because Derwent will sleep with that one who has a bed to herself—There now are but two, of these Mary has one and Tom the other. What follows? I have not a single bed to offer to a friend, and it will be impossible for Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth¹ and Miss Wordsworth ever to pay us a visit, and not only that but when Mrs. Coleridge lies in, there must be a little bed in her room for the Nurse—and of course for five or six weeks I must have a bedroom for myself. Indeed I could not at any time do without one, for if I am the least unwell I am utterly sleepless unless I have a bed to myself and a bedroom too. There is an outhouse which I had hoped to have had turned into a study for myself—it would have been so large that I might [have] occasionally slept in it wholesomely, which I could not do in the little wing-room, which will otherwise be my study. But I find that it is impossible to have it fitted up till next year, and I *thought* that when I mentioned it Jackson enumerated the *costs* of flooring etc., as if it would be more money than he could conveniently hazard, as it would be of no use to him if I were to go away. At present it is merely the brick walls, and the blue slates above. I fear, too, that the new house will not be finished till the middle of November, tho' Jackson has promised me to bestir himself. This however, is a trifle. The days are so short at the close of October, that it will make but little difference your not arriving till a month later. Besides, you might come and have furnished lodgings at Keswick, for a month—at least, either for you and Edith and child, or for Mary and Tom, for half of you we could certainly either find or make room for. The former objections are more weighty. Mrs. Coleridge will write in a day or two an exact account of the furniture, that we have, and of what will be wanted, supposing these objections can be done away. It is absolutely necessary that I should have one spare room always ready for Wordsworth and his wife—and though

¹ The Wordsworths were married a month later, on October 4, 1802.

Dorothy would of course always accompany them, yet I suppose Mrs. Lovell would give her half her bed. It would be convenient to have a second bed-room for myself—but this I can easily waive. When Wordsworth was not expected of course, I should use *his* room, as I have been accustomed to call it, and when there, I shall either be well, and Mrs. C. likewise, and we sleep in one room, or I can shut the little lazy-bed that the nurse will sleep in, into my study for the few nights he may be at Keswick. I told you that you might have *half* the house—i.e. 5 rooms besides the kitchen, and unless we retained 5 we should be as straightened as if we were in lodgings—and in case of sickness, we should be [so] thronged as to be miserable. So much for business. Sara will write to Mary or Edith, and when you have the whole before you you must then settle it—now for the remainder. The letter to Estlin is not the existing half, nor the 20th part of the existing half of my *Letters* to the *British Critic*.¹ W. Taylor's notion that Christ was the author of the Wisdom of Solomon seems to me a silly one, unless he can shew the Gospel and Epistles of John to be not only forgeries, but forgeries without any foundation in the real doctrines, and tenets of Jesus. He says "that the Apostles often quote the book". God bless him! why not—"the book often quotes the Apostles". The wisdom of Solomon is supposed by Eichhorn² to have been written in the Second Century by an Alexandrian Christian. As to the latter part I was never more astonished in my life, than when I read that sentence in your letter—"the latter solution is so strikingly probable that I know not how it should now be first made"—I should suppose that nothing was ever older. Before I went to Germany, I spoke to Estlin of the great importance of the miracle of the Ascension, without which the Resurrection could never be proved to be a miracle at all—or anything more than re-suscitation, as the body was not putrified, and

¹ Coleridge's letters to the *British Critic* have not been identified.

² J. G. Eichhorn (1752-1827) was at Göttingen during Coleridge's stay there. Coleridge refers to his *Einleitung in die apokryphischen Schriften des Alten Testaments*, 1795.

as Christ was so manifestly *favoured* both by Pilate and the Soldiers. Estlin admitted it but spoke of the objection as a very old one. "Either," he said, "the Ascension is true, or a lie—if true, it confirms the miraculous nature of the Resurrection; if a lie, what need of any ingenious hypothesis about the Resurrection? They are *both* Lies!" My mind misgave me at that time, that thousands who would die rather than tell a lie for a lie, will tell so to *help out* what they believe to be a certain truth, and the idea made great impression on my mind, though without the least suspicion that it was anything but an old objection. In Germany I found it the *universal* solution, and at Göttingen I understood that it was publicly *stated* as the probable truth by Eichhorn, and passages from Plutarch, as well as the passage you refer to in Josephus cited by him. On my return home Dr. Beddoes in Biggs' shop detailed this as a general opinion, and lo and behold, in Herder's *Von der Auferstehung als Glauben, Geschichte und Lehre*,¹ i.e. "Of the Resurrection as an article of Faith, of History, and of Doctrine"—I found the whole developed in a delightful manner, with the curious passages in Plutarch and a bold laugh at those who lay'd any stress on the Ascension. I detailed this to you at Keswick, if I am not greatly mistaken, and I am positive that both Davy and myself entered fully into it at your rooms when Northmore² was there. Indeed, it would be strange if I had never mentioned it to you, for I believe you would be the only one of my acquaintance to whom I have not mentioned it and dwelt upon it. I cannot believe that W. Taylor considers this as any discovery of his own. Before the time of Grotius' *De Veritate Christianae*³ no less was lay'd on the judicial law-cant kind of evidence for Christianity which has been since so much in fashion, and Lessing

¹ J. G. von Herder's *Von der Auferstehung, als Glauben, Geschichte und Lehre*, 1794. The copy in the British Museum (Catalogue No. C. 43, a. 7.) is copiously annotated by Coleridge.

² See *Letters*, i. 306-307, for Coleridge's description of Thomas Northmore and the visit alluded to in the letter.

³ Hugo Grotius's *de Veritate Religionis Christianae* was published in 1627.

very sensibly considers Grotius as the greatest enemy Christianity ever had. Since his time I cannot but think that this hypothesis would be found in many authors long before Herder or Eichhorn. Neither does Herder in the book now before me lay any claim to originality; and this book, if I am not mistaken, W. Taylor *reviewed*. He certainly did two other little tracts that usually accompany it. I need not say that Herder (who is a sort of German Bishop) writes very slyly, and admits the possibility of the resurrection, as a mere natural occurrence, and the probability of it, as if nothing were lost to Christianity by the admission. I will quote one sentence p. 120. They held that to be a miracle which was no miracle; they believed that this Resurrection was effected by the omnipotence of God, when perhaps it was merely a natural resurrection in consequence of the powerful perfume of Nicodemus. Plank has written a very large and most factfull History of the Reformation¹—God bless you and S. T. C.

P.S. As soon as the new house is finished, the whole front of the old one will be pulled down, if it does not fall before, so we *cannot* have any rooms in that.

LETTER 98

To WILLIAM SOTHEY, *Lodge, Loughton, Essex.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby William Sotheby (1757-1833) was a poet and dramatist of considerable reputation. He enjoyed the esteem not only of Coleridge, but of Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, and others.]

Greta Hall, Keswick.

Sunday Evening, Sept. 19, 1802.

MY DEAR SIR

Late yesterday evening on my return from Broughton, I had the pleasure of finding the long-expected Parcel.² It arrived at Keswick on Friday Night. It is so splendid a

¹ G. J. Planck's, *Geschichte der Entstehung der Veränderungen und der Bildung unsers protestantischen Lehrbegriffs vom Anfang der Reformation bis zu der Einführung der Concordienformel*, 1791-1800.

² Referring to some books sent by Sotheby.

present, that my first Feeling was not wholly unmixed—I did not know what I had asked. Immediately on my return I had a slight attack of Fever—and am but just now risen from bed—of course, I write now merely to acknowledge the receipt of the Parcel. You asked me in your last concerning Barrow. Mr. Pocklington is very ill, and in case of his Decease it is on the whole rather probable than otherwise, that it will be put up for sale—tho' he is so strange, and so intensely selfish, a character, that no one would be surprized, if knowing how many People are anxious to have it, he should prevent it's sale by a direct clause in his Will. Should this not be the case, I still cannot advise you to think of it. Depend upon it, it will go at an extravagant, Fancy Price. I myself know three people agape for it. Sir Wilfred Lawson, who has a noble, I might well say, a kingly mansion at Broughton, is enamoured of Barrow. Sir W. is a man, who never lets money stand in the way of any of his inclinations, and he told me himself on Saturday morning, that tho' he would not make a fool of himself by giving an extravagant price for it, yet he would bid hard. However, there could be no objection to your bidding your own Sum ; but the House itself is in many respects objectionable. During the whole of the winter months it is utterly sunless ; and tho' the Rooms themselves may not be damp, yet the situation is exceedingly so. How often do I see the spot, where the House lies, involved in mist, when all the vale beside, is free ! Add to this, that like the rest of Mr. Pocklington's Houses, it is built compleatly in the Spirit of a Bachelor, all the other rooms are sacrificed to the Dining Room. That is a noble Room, made for a whole Neighbourhood ; but it is the only room—the Bedrooms are mere Pigeon Holes. If it were possible to find a truly fine situation, with ground enough about it for a couple of Cows, and a few Horses, it would certainly be better economy to build a House : for if the situation were well chosen, and the House built with *good* sense in it's inside, and *fine* sense in it's outside, it is what in the common language of men would be called a *certainty*, that whenever you were tired of it, it might

be either let or sold without any loss, and most probably, to a great Advantage. But I cannot say, that I *know* any such situation. The one at Applethwaite is indeed in point of the exquisitely picturesque confided view on the one side, and the glorious view of the whole vale of lakes on the other, in point of the dryness of the Roads immediately around, and the number of lovely walks close by, the place, to which I have long and uniformly given the preference over any other spot in the whole vale, from the Gorge of Borrodale to the outlet of Bassenthwaite. But there is no land around it, at least, not more than an acre. If however your partiality to this country should continue, and you should wish to pass any number of months here, this Greta Hall will be finished in less than two months, and you might have five rooms (two very large ones) and a kitchen, cellar and stable, with as much garden ground as you wished ; and you might have it for any length of time, from three months to three years. The house would be perfectly distinct from ours, it would be quite half-furnished, and the annual rent including Taxes would not exceed 25*£*. Any furniture sells here by auction nine times out of ten at *more* than it's original value—at the worst, no one loses more than a very moderate percentage for it's use. I have stated this—because it exists—and because I wish you to know all that there is, and all that there is not, in the vale—leaving the Things to persuade or dissuade, according as their nature and quality may be. It would make me truly happy, if you should feel an impulse to come and look out for yourself. We can make up three beds for you at an hour's warning.

We have had dismal weather lately—the last three days have been hot summer weather—and it is interesting to see under Skiddaw the Hay, the *first fruits* of the soil, in the same fields with the Corn-sheaves. Did you see a very fine sonnet on Buonaparte in the Morning Post of Wednesday or Thursday last ? It was written by Wordsworth—and comes upon my Feelings, as in the spirit of the best of Milton's sonnets.¹

¹ Wordsworth's sonnet, *I Grieved for Buonaparte*, was published in the *Morning Post*, September 6, 1802. Cf. *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford), 304.

Present my kindest and most respectful remembrances to Mrs. and Miss Sotheby, and believe me, my dear Sir, with unfeigned and affectionate Esteem

Your's truly,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Sir Wilfred Lawson has a most splendid Library at Broughton: in Voyages, Travels and Books of Natural History it is no doubt the first in the Island, next to Sir Joseph Banks's. He is an extremely liberal and good-natured creature. We have had Sir Charles and Lady Boughton here, with Miss Boughton—and with them Miles Peter Andrews and Captain Topham. Sir Charles perfectly *astounded* me by the diversity of his attainments—Musician, both as Composer, and Player—Draftsman—Poet—and Linguist, both of the Western and Oriental languages almost to a prodigy.

LETTER 99

To BASIL MONTAGU.

[Original letter, Huntington Library. The letter is addressed to Basil Montagu (not Montague as Coleridge usually wrote). It was Montagu who precipitated the quarrel between Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1810 (*Life*, 179-180). Montagu is remembered for his legal works and for his *Works of Lord Bacon* (1825-1837), which brought forth Macaulay's famous essay on Bacon in July, 1837.]

Greta Hall, Keswick, Tuesday, Sept. 21, 1802.

MY DEAR MONTAGUE

I received your Letter last night, inclosing two pound—and another two pound in a Letter from Dorothy¹—which is amply sufficient for me. I am at ease. I am puzzled how to read the Direction you have sent—I suppose, it is Christ College—and yet I know not how it can be that, as you lodge opposite Jesus—

You would have heard from me some days ago had I known your address—and by the close of this week you will hear from me to some purpose. Be under no alarm concerning any other selections—were there twenty, it would

¹ Dorothy Wordsworth.

increase not diminish the probable sale of our's—it may possibly be prudent to give the work a more extensive name—ex. gr.

“Examination of the Style of our English Prose Writers under Charles I. and the Commonwealth, chiefly in reference to Jeremy Taylor, and Milton, with illustrative Selections.”¹ I do not see that the Book Mackintosh mentions will be of any use to me, sufficient to repay the expense of carriage. I have Milton's Works, Hall's Works, and all Taylor's, together with his rhythms. We have been plagued to death with a swarm of Visitors—I thought of having a Board nailed up at my Door with the following Words painted on it—Visited *out*, and, removed to the Strand, opposite to St. Clement's Church, for the Benefit of Retirement.

You tell me—you are very very happy. How can you be otherwise? You have no overburthening cares—you have an active mind—a kind and gentle Heart and a wife devoted to you, a beautiful Woman, pure and innocent as her own dear Babe—affectionate, as yourself, and her affections moving in the same Directions. Beside which, she has a voice and a Harp that would make me as great a Poet as Milton (I sometimes think) if I lived near you. May the Almighty bless you both, and continue you to be the sources of each other's Goodness as well as Comfort.

What are your motives for a residence at Cambridge? I went last week to Broughton to Sir Wilfred Lawson's who unites a kingly House with a most kingly Library. On my return I called at a Friend's or acquaintance's rather who lay ill in a nervous Fever—on my Return I experienced an attack of the same—a sudden loss of strength and Spirits, with a very quick and very feeble pulse. My pulse was 120 in the course of the night. I had been myself a witness of the vast efficacy of the muriatic acid in low Fever—and took a large Dose—and it assuredly stopped the Progress of the Fever. I am very weak—and my bowels deranged by the violence of

¹ Coleridge refers to Montagu's, *Selections from the Works of Taylor, Hall, and Lord Bacon, with an Analysis of the Advancement of Learning* (1805). Coleridge's assistance probably did not extend beyond advice.

the Acid—but my spirits have recovered from the utter Prostration into which they fell on the commencement of the attack and my pulse is fuller, and less frequent.

Hartley was six years old lately—and Derwent 2 years last Tuesday—on which day he could tell all his Letters—and tell the names of upwards of 60 animals, on the picture Cards. He is as quick a Learner for his age as any child I know of—and there is not a child of his age in Christendom that I love so well.

I am grieved that Dorothy has been stopped in bed—by a violent cold. My best prayers for your Infant—and to Laura a Brother's affectionate kind wishes. Your's, dear Montague, most sincerely,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I shall write again on Saturday, if I am alive.

LETTER 100

To WILLIAM SOTHEY, *Lodge, Loughton, Essex.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby.]

Keswick,

Friday, October 1, 1802.

MY DEAR SIR

I had written about half of a letter to you on the Orestes,¹ as a *Poem*, and a *Tragedy*—on it's excellencies and Beauties, and on it's defects—when some necessary business, joined with ill-health, came and stopped me. Eam reverentiam cum literis ipsis, tum scriptis tuis, debeo ut sumere in manus illa, nisi vacuo animo, irreligiosum putem. But I shall have a day's Leisure in the beginning of next week—and believe me, I have no pleasanter employment to anticipate. In the meantime, I find lying before me a sheet of *minutiae minutissimae*, which I send you, *half-ashamed*. After I had looked at the building with something of the eye of an architect, to turn myself into a *fly*, and creep over it with *animalcular* feet, and peer microscopically at the sand-grit of it's component Stones—this may give you no great

¹ Sotheby's *Orestes* (of which Coleridge thought so highly) was published in 1802.

idea of my Taste, but I am persuaded, it will please you as proof of the weal, with which I read, while I read. [When] I have prefixed to the sheet a significant? I mean to imply, that all below are mere Queries—and that if any word or sentence have a dogmatic tone, this was merely a mode of conveying the whole idea in my mind fully and broadly; and was absolutely unaccompanied by any *feeling* of dogmatism. How deeply I admire the Tragedy, and how sincerely, I flatter myself, I shall prove to you in proving that I *understand* it. It is matter of regret with me, that my Greek Tragedies are not yet come from London—but some future time I will write you yet another letter (unconscionable scribe that I am) giving a comparative analysis—Wordsworth will be married, *Deo Volente* on next Monday, Oct. 4—and purposes to be at his own cottage at Grasmere on Wednesday, Oct. 6— He has every reason for a confident Hope that Lord Lowther¹ will pay the Debt.

I am so extremely busy on the Morning Post at present, and shall continue so, for the ensuing fortnight,² that I shall scarcely have time to look over and transcribe the First Navigator,³ till the 14th of this month, I would therefore fix the 20th (which is my 30th birthday) for the time of sending it off to you—but yet if Mr. Tomkyns really *want* it before, I will *make* time. My next letter will be dated two days earlier than this, for it will not be worth while to transcribe it—

I have had a very serious attack of low Fever, and stopped it completely by the use of the muriatic acid, which has however deranged my bowels, and both the Disease and the Remedy have left me very weak.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

My most respectful remembrance to Mrs. Miss and Captain Sotheby.

¹ Lord Lowther (1757-1844). See letter to William Wordsworth of August 6, 1803, No. 121 and footnote.

² Coleridge contributed very considerably to the *Morning Post* from September to November, 1802. See *Essays on His Own Times*, ii. 478-592.

³ Coleridge says in a letter to Sotheby dated July 19, 1802, that he had translated Gesner's, *Der Erste Schiffer*, but no MS. seems to be extant. Cf. *Letters*, i. 376 and note.

LETTER 101

To TOM WEDGWOOD, *Eastbury, Blandford.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. Vaughan Williams. Published with omissions, *Reminiscences*, 443-448, and *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. F. Litchfield, 1903, 113-117.

*Greta Hall, Keswick,
October 20, 1802.*

MY DEAR SIR

This is my Birthday, my thirtieth. It will not appear wonderful to you therefore, when I tell you that before the arrival of your Letter I had been thinking with a great weight of different feelings concerning you and your dear Brother. For I have good reason to believe, that I should not now have been alive, if in addition to other miseries I had had immediate poverty pressing upon me. I will never again remain silent so long. It has not been altogether Indolence or my habits of Procrastination which have kept me from writing, but an eager wish, I may truly say, a Thirst of Spirit, to have something honorable to tell you of myself— At present I must be content to tell you something cheerful. My Health is very much better. I am stronger in every respect : and am not injured by study or the act of sitting at my writing Desk. But my eyes suffer if at any time I have been intemperate in the use of Candle-light. This account supposes another, namely, that my mind is calm and more at ease. My dear Sir ! when I was last with you at Stowey, my heart was often full, and I could scarcely keep from communicating to you the tale of my distresses. But how could I add to your depression, when you were low ? Or how interrupt, or cast a shade on your good spirits, that were so rare and so precious to you ? After my return to Keswick, I was, if possible, more miserable than before. Scarce a day passed without such a scene of discord between me and Mrs. Coleridge, as quite incapacitated me for any worthy exertion of my faculties by degrading me in my own estimation. I found my temper impaired, and daily more so ; the good and pleasurable thoughts, which had been the support of my moral character, departed from my solitude. I determined to go abroad—but

alas ! the less I loved my wife, the more dear and necessary did my children seem to me. I found no comfort except in the driest speculations—In the Ode to Dejection, which you were pleased with, these lines ¹ in the original followed the line—My shaping spirit of Imagination—

“ For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can,
And haply by abstruse Research to steal
From my own Nature all the natural man—
This was my sole resource, my only plan,
And that which suits a part infects the whole
And now is almost grown the Temper of my Soul.”

I give you these lines for the Truth and not for the Poetry. However about two months ago after a violent quarrel I was taken suddenly ill with spasms in my stomach—I expected to die—Mrs. C. was, of course, shocked and frightened beyond measure—and two days after, I being still very weak and pale as death, she threw herself upon me, and made a solemn promise of amendment—and she has kept her promise beyond any hope, I could have flattered myself with: and I have reason to believe, that two months of tranquillity, and the sight of my now not colourless and cheerful countenance, have really made her feel as a Wife ought to feel. If any woman wanted an exact and copious Recipe, “ How to make a Husband compleatly miserable,” I could her furnish with one—with a *Probatum est*, tacked to it. Ill-tempered Speeches sent after me when I went out of the House, ill-tempered Speeches on my return, my friends received with freezing looks, the least opposition or contradiction occasioning screams of passion, and the sentiments which I held most base, ostentatiously avowed—all this added to the utter negation of all, which a Husband expects from a Wife—especially, living in retirement—and the consciousness that I was myself growing a worse man. O dear Sir ! no one can tell what I have suffered. I can say with strict truth, that

¹ *Dejection : an Ode*, lines 87-93 ; *Poems*, 367. We find Coleridge quoting this passage a number of times in his letters ; he was apparently very fond of the lines, as expressing his feelings of regret and resignation.

the happiest half-hours, I have had, were when all of a sudden, as I have been sitting alone in my Study I have burst into Tears.

But better days are arrived, and are still to come. I have had visitations of Hope, that I may yet be something of which those, who love me, may be proud. I cannot write that without recalling dear Poole—I have heard twice—and written twice—and I fear that by a strange fatality, one of the Letters will have missed him. Leslie ¹ was here some time ago. I was very much pleased with him. And now I will tell you what I am doing. I dedicate three days in the week to the *Morning Post* ² and shall hereafter write for the far greater part such things only, as will be of as permanent Interest, as anything I can hope to write—and you will shortly see a little Essay of mine justifying the writing in a Newspaper. My comparison of the French with the Roman Empire was very favorably received.³ The Poetry, which I have sent, has been merely the emptying out of my Desk. The Epigrams ⁴ are wretched indeed; but they answered Stuart's purpose better than better things—I ought not to have given any signature to them whatsoever—I never dreamt of acknowledging either them or the Ode to the Rain.⁵ As to feeble expressions and unpolished lines—there is the Rub! Indeed, my dear Sir! I do value your opinion very highly—I should think your judgment on the sentiment, the imagery, the flow of a Poem decisive at least, if it differed from my own, and after frequent consideration mine remained different—it would leave me at least perplexed. For you are a perfect electrometer in these things—

¹ Sir John Leslie (1766-1832) the philosopher and mathematician, superintended the studies of Tom and Josiah Wedgwood in their laboratory at Etruria. (See *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. B. Litchfield, 1903, 11.) John Leslie was given an annuity of £150 by the Wedgwoods in 1797.

² Coleridge contributed to the *Morning Post* from December 7, 1797, to September 26, 1806.

³ Cf. *Morning Post*, September 21 and 25, and October 2, 1802; and *Essays on His Own Times*, ii. 478-514.

⁴ Cf. *Morning Post*, October 11, 1802.

⁵ Cf. *Poems*, 382.

but in point of poetic Diction I am not so well satisfied that you do not require a certain *Aloofness* from the language of real Life, which I think deadly to poetry. Very shortly however, I shall present you from the Press with my opinions in full on the subject of Style both in prose and verse—and I am confident of one thing, that I shall convince you that I have thought much and patiently on the subject, and that I understand the whole strength of my Antagonist's Cause. For I am now busy on the subject—and shall in a very few weeks go to Press with a Volume on the Prose writings of Hall, Milton, and Taylor—and shall immediately follow it up with an Essay on the writings of Dr. Johnson, and Gibbon—And in these two Volumes I flatter myself that I shall present a fair History of English Prose. If my life and health remain, and I do but write half as much and as regularly, as I have done during the last six weeks, these will be finished by January next—and I shall then put together my memorandum Book on the subject of poetry. In both I have sedulously endeavoured to state the Facts, and the Differences, clearly and acutely—and my reasons for the Preference of one style and another are secondary to this. Of this be assured, that I will never give anything to the world in *propria personâ*, in my own name, which I have not tormented with the File. I sometimes suspect, that my foul Copy would often appear to general Readers more polished than my fair Copy—Many of the feeble and colloquial Expressions have been industriously substituted for others, which struck me as artificial, and not standing the test—as being neither the language of passion, nor distinct Conceptions.

Dear Sir ! indulge me with looking still further on to my literary Life. I have since my twentieth year meditated an heroic poem on the Siege of Jerusalem by Titus—this is the Pride, and the Stronghold of my Hope. But I never think of it except in my best moods. The work, to which I dedicate the ensuing years of my Life, is one which highly pleased Leslie in prospective and my paper will not let me prattle to you about it. I have written what you most

wished me to write, all about myself. Our climate is inclement, and our Houses not as compact as they might be but it is a stirring climate and the worse the weather, the more unceasingly entertaining are my Study Windows—and the month, that is to come, is the Glory of the year with us. A very warm Bedroom I can promise you, and one that at the same time commands our finest Lake—and Mountain view. If Leslie could not go abroad with you, and I could in any way mould my manners and habits to suit you, I should of all things like to be your companion. Good nature, an affectionate Disposition, and so thorough a sympathy with the nature of your complaint that I should feel no pain, not the most momentary, in being told by you what your feelings required at the time in which they required it—this I should bring with me. But I need not say, that you may say to me—“You don’t suit me,” without inflicting the least mortification. Of course this letter is for your Brother, as for you—but I shall write to him soon. God bless you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 102

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. The letters to Mrs. Coleridge immediately preceding Sara Coleridge’s birth on December 23, 1802, are among Coleridge’s most tender ones.]

St. Clears, Carmarthen, Tuesday Morning, ½ past 5 !!
Nov. 22, 1802.

MY DEAR LOVE

We¹ left this place some two hours before your letter arrived, and returned hither yesterday afternoon, ½ past 1—half an hour too late for me to answer your letter by yesterday’s post. I know that this will be a morning of bustle : and the desire of writing you lay so heavy on my mind, that I awoke at 4 o’clock this morning. The fires here in every room keep in all day and all night ; and yet they do not use so much coal on the whole as we do. It burns like a brick-

¹ Coleridge was at this time travelling with Tom Wedgwood, who was in ill health.

kiln fire, is never touched and never goes out, till the last cinder falls out of the grate. Would to Heaven you had only a few waggon loads of them for the next 3 or 4 months ! A little after the clock struck 5, I rose and lit my candle, found the untended fire in the parlour bright and clear, and am sitting by it, writing to you—to tell you, how very much I was and am affected by the tidings of your fainting, and to beg you *instantly* to get a nurse. If Mary's aunt cannot come, do write immediately to Mrs. Clarkson,¹ and try to get Mrs. Railton. To be sure there is a mawkish "*so-very-goodness*" about her character, and her face and dress have too much of the *Smug-doleful* in them, for *my* Taste, but I believe, she is really a well-intentioned honest woman and she is certainly an excellent nurse. At all events, get somebody immediately—have a fire in your bedroom—and have nothing to do with Derwent, either to mind or dress him. If you are seriously ill or unhappy at my absence, I will return at all hazards : for I know, you would not *will* it, tho' you might *wish* it, except for a serious cause.

I shall write to Mr. Estlin for my letter. You speak too of a letter from Mr. Dennis ; where is it ? I have received none. If I want the old man of the Alps I will write for it.

Indeed, my dear Love ! I did not write to you that letter from the Passage without much pain and many struggles of mind, resolves, and counter-resolves. Had there been nothing but your feelings concerning Penrith I should have passed it over—as merely a little tiny fretfulness—but there was one whole sentence of a very, very different cast. It immediately disordered my heart, and bowels. If it had not I should not have written you ; but it is necessary, absolutely necessary for you to know how such things do affect me. My bodily feelings are linked in so peculiar a way with my ideas that you cannot *enter into* a state of heart so utterly different from your own natural constitution. You can only see and know, that so it is. Now, what we know only by the outward fact, and not by sympathy and inward experience of the same, we are *all* of us too apt to forget, and incur the

¹ Mrs. Catherine Clarkson, the wife of Thomas Clarkson.

necessity of being *reminded* of it by others. And this is one among the many causes, which render the marriage of unequal and unlike understandings and dispositions so exceedingly miserable. Heaven bear me witness. . . .¹

Be assured, my dear Love, that I shall never write otherwise than *most* kindly to you, except after great *aggressions* on your part ; and not then, unless my reason convinces me that some good end will be answered by my reprehensions—My dear Love ! let me in the spirit of Love say two things. 1. I owe duties, and solemn ones to you, as my wife, but some equally solemn ones to Myself, to my children, to my friends and to society. When duties are at variance dreadful as the case may be, there must be a choice. I can neither retain my happiness nor my faculties, unless I move, live and love in perfect freedom, limited only by my own purity and self-respect and by my incapability of loving any person, man or woman, unless at the same time I honor and esteem them. My love is made up of 9/10ths of fervent wishes for the permanent *peace* of mind of those whom I love, be it man or woman ; and for their progression in purity, goodness, and true knowledge. Such being the nature of my love, no human being can have a right to be jealous. My nature is quick to love and retentive. Of those who are within the immediate sphere of my daily agency and bound to me by bonds of Nature or Neighbourhood I shall love each as they appear to me to deserve my love, and to be capable of returning it. More is not in my power. If I would do it, I could not. That we can love but one person is a miserable mistake and the cause of abundant unhappiness. I can and do love many people, dearly—so dearly, that I really scarcely know, which I love the best. Is it not so with every good mother who has a large number of children—and with many, many brothers and sisters in large and affectionate families ? Why should it be otherwise with friends ? Would any good and wise man, any warm and wide-hearted man marry at all, if it were part of the contract ? Henceforth the woman is your only friend, the sole beloved ! all the rest of mankind,

¹ A line and a half erased.

however amiable and akin to you, must be only your *acquaintance* ! It were well, if every woman wrote down before her marriage all, she thought, she had a *right* to from her husband and to examine each in this form. By what *Law* of God, of man, or of general reason, do I claim *this* right ? I suspect, that this process would make a ludicrous quantity of blots and erasures in most of the first rude draughts of these Rights of Wives—infinity however to their own advantage, and to the security of their true and genuine rights. 2. Permit me, my dear Sara, without offence to you, as Heaven knows ! it is without any feeling of pride in myself, to say, that in six acquirements, and in the quantity and quality of natural endowments whether of feeling, or of intellect, you are the inferior. Therefore it would be preposterous to expect that I should see with your eyes, and dismiss my friends from *my* heart ; but it is not preposterous in me, on the contrary I have a *right* to expect and demand that you should to a certain degree love and act kindly to those whom I deem worthy of my Love. If you read this letter with half the tenderness with which it is written, it will do you and both of us *good*. . . .¹

You know Sally Pally ! I must have a joke or it would not be me !

Over frightful roads we at last arrived at Crescelly about 3 o'clock—found a Captain and Mrs. Tyler there (a stupid Brace) Jessica, Emma, and Frances Allen²—All simple, good, kind-hearted lasses, and Jessie the eldest uncommonly so. We dined at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4—just after dinner down came old Allen—O Christ ! Old Nightmair ! An ancient Incubus ! Every face was saddened, every mouth pursed up ! Most solemnly civil, like the Lord of a stately castle 500 years ago ! Doleful and plaintive eke for I believe that the Devil *is* twitching him home. After tea he left us, and went again to bed, and the whole party recovered their spirits. I drank nothing but I eat sweet meats, and cream and some fruit and talked a great deal and sate up till 12, and did not go to sleep till near 2. In consequence of which I rose sickish at $\frac{1}{2}$ past

¹ Erased $\frac{1}{4}$ th of a line. ² Sisters-in-law of Josiah Wedgwood.

7—my breakfast brought me about—and all the way from Crescelly I was in a very pleasurable state of feeling, but my feelings too tender, my thoughts too vivid—I was *deliciously* unwell. On my arrival at St. Clears, I received your letter, and had scarcely read it before a fluttering of the heart came on, which ended (as usual) in a sudden and violent diarrhoea. I could scarcely touch my dinner and was obliged at last to take 20 drops of Laudanum which now that I have for 10 days left off all stimulus of all kinds, excepting $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of a grain of opium at night, acted upon me more powerfully than 80 or 100 drops would have done at Keswick. I slept sound while I did sleep; but I am not *quite* well this morning; but I shall get round again in the course of the day—You must see by this, what absolute necessity I am under of *dieting* myself, and if possible, the still greater importance of *tranquillity* to me.

All the wood-cocks seems to have left the country. T. Wedgewood's hopes and schemes are again all afloat—to-day we leave this place—shall probably return to Crescelly—and then—God knows, where! Cornwall perhaps—Ireland perhaps—perhaps, Cumberland—possibly Naples or Madeira, or Teneriffe. I do not see any likelihood of our going to the moon, or to either of the Planets, or fixed stars—and that is all, I can say. Write immediately my dear Love! and direct to me—where? That's the puzzle—to be left at the Post Office Carmarthen. God bless you, my dear Love! and speed me back to you, and our dear H. and D. *and etc.* Mr. T. Wedgewood desires his best respects to you—he is not come down—God bless you again and

S. T. COLERIDGE

LETTER 103

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Crescelly, Saturday Night, Dec. 4, 1802.

MY DEAREST LOVE

I will not disappoint you of a letter, tho' by a joint blunder of mine and the Postboy's I cannot send the draft,

till to-morrow ; and for fear of accident do not expect it till this day week—tho' I hope it will arrive on Friday suffering this letter to arrive on Thursday—

I have vexed and fretted myself that I did not send it a fortnight ago—there was no earthly reason, why I should not—You know how hateful all money-thoughts are to me ! and how idly and habitually I keep them at arm's length.

I received to-night yours, Lady Rush's—with a letter from Col. Moore—and one from Clarkson. I was affected by your letter with such joy and anxious love—so overpowered by it, that I could not endure to read Lady Rush's—nor have I yet done it. God love you and have you in his keeping, my blessed Sara ! and speedily restore me to you. I have a faith, a heavenly faith that our future days will be days of peace and affectionate happiness. I wish that I were now with you. I feel it very very hard to be from you at this trying time. I dare not think a moment concerning you in this relation, or I should be immediately ill. But I shall soon return and bring you back a confident and affectionate husband. Again and again my dearest dearest Sara ! my wife and my love and indeed my very Hope. May God preserve you ! And do you above all things take care of yourself. If you have no other serious objection but the expense to Mrs. Railton I desire, I *command* you, to have her instantly. Heaven forbid we should save a few pounds at this time. If you want the money immediately and cannot without discomfort wait another day—but this is idle—one or two days can make no difference. I have some thoughts of sending 50*£* which you may change by paying Miss Crosthwaite's bill. I shall write to Colonel Moore tomorrow.

Tomorrow morning T. Wedgewood goes to Treharne about 13 miles from hence—to see a cottage which he means to take. On Wednesday or Thursday he will receive an answer from Gunville, and before that I trust he will receive an answer from Luff. In all probability we shall leave this place for Gunville on Friday or Saturday—and from thence after a short stay proceed together to Keswick. I cannot doubt that I, at least, shall be with you by New Year's Day—

tho' *possibly* I may be obliged to leave you again for two or three months—But the future is a cloud.

Josiah Wedgewood has been ill with the rheumatism—he has written in a letter to Tom W. (received this evening) a most affectionate paragraph to me, assuring me of his love and perfect regard. It affected me greatly. It is one o'clock, and I must finish this letter for it is to go off tomorrow morning at 8. I am very comfortable here. Sally Wedgewood¹ is really the most perfectly good woman, I ever knew, and the three Allens are sweet, cheerful, and most innocent girls. I cannot help being idle among them. What sweeter and more tranquillizing pleasure is there than to feel one's self completely innocent among completely innocent young women! Save when I think of home my mind is calm and soundless. Sally Wedgewood plays on the Piano Forte *divinely*! Warm room, warm bedrooms, music, pleasant talking, and extreme temperance—all this agrees with me—and the best blessing that results from all, is on *placid sleep*—no *difficulties* in my dreams, no fairies.

There is an old Aunt in the house a large fat old lady her name Mrs. Jones, foolishly good-tempered and of frisky spirits. She is old Allen's own sister, and has another brother, Joshua Allen, a great oddity and enthusiastic methodist. It is notorious to everyone but himself that he neither does care, or ever has cared a farthing for his wife or children. This man descanted on religion in the following words. All our sinful affections give way to the blessed graces of religion—I am so completely a new creature by means of religion tho' it is well known what love I bear my wife and children, yet if a man were to murder them before my face, I am positive, that I should not feel the least spark of resentment! Nay, nay, Brother Josh—(exclaimed the old lady who looks up to him as to an angel) there you *do* go somewhat too far—I *should* be a *little offended* at it! Jessica Allen was present and told me the story with infinite humour.

¹ Sarah Wedgewood (called Sally), a sister of Tom and Josiah Wedgewood, was at this time a young woman of 26.

Give my best love to Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Wilson and
O! my sweet Hartley and my Derwent!

God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

Josiah Wedgewood's Esq. Gunville, near Blandford, Dorset,
will be my next address.

LETTER 104

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Crescelly, Dec. 5, 1802.

MY DEAR LOVE

I enclose a Draft for 50*£*, dated Monday December 13th and payable two months after date. I would have you pay Miss Crosthwaite's Bill—ordering in all you will want for the next month, and so paying up for the whole year at once. Mr. Jackson will be so good as to pay the bill for you and indorse the draft which I have drawn in his name—whether you can likewise send 10*£* to your mother, you will see, after you have paid all that is needful or well to pay. J. Anson and the Carrier must be payed off hand. Be sure not to leave yourself with less than 10*£* if possible—and therefore as I would have you pay the butcher and Flour woman you had better not think of your mother.

T. Wedgwood did not go to-day to Treharne—but I go with him tomorrow. As I must get up early, I must not write longer to keep myself awake. I have been listening to sweet music till I am much effeminated, and if I were to indulge in any thoughts respecting Keswick I should not close my eyes for hours. God bless you my dear Love! Don't you think Crescelly Coleridge would be a pretty name for a boy? If a Girl, let it be Gretha Coleridge—not Greta—but Gretha—unless you prefer Rotha or Laurie; what do you think of Bridget? Only it ought to end with a vowel. You must take your choice of Sara, Gretha, or rather Algretta, Rotha, Laura, Emily, or Lovenna. The Boy must be either Bracy or Crescelly—Algretta Coleridge will needs be a beautiful Girl.

God bless you, my dear Wife—and our sweet children,
and your affectionate husband

S. T. COLERIDGE.

For God's sake don't let the expense weigh with you about a nurse. You ought to think of a servant. I hope, Sara Hutchinson will be well enough to come in, while you are lying in—both she and Mary Wordsworth are good nurses.

LETTER 105

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Crescelly,

Monday Morning, 8 o'clock, Dec. 13, 1802.

MY DEAR LOVE

A few minutes remain before the Post, for me to tell you that here I still am—and that nothing has happened—and that my health seems stationary, saving that my half boot with a hard fold has bruised the cross of my foot, which swells and inflames at evenings and gives me much pain and some concern. We waited for a letter from Luff and one from Gunville—my letter to Luff has been blown about by cross winds. When that from Gunville arrives, which surely will come tomorrow, we shall, I suppose, leave this place—but probably not for Gunville, but for Keswick. Supposing this to be the case, and supposing we set off on Wednesday or Thursday morning, we shall be eight days at least in the journey—so that we cannot be there before Christmas Day—it is my intention as you will be confined, to have T. Wedgwood at Clarkson's. But all this may all happen differently! I sent you a week ago, a draft dated from this day, for 50*£*. I will give you notice, as soon as I know myself, when a letter from you will meet me. I hope, that Sara Hutchinson is well enough to have come in—it would be a great comfort, that one or other of the three women at Grasmere should be with you and Sara rather than the other two because you will hardly have another opportunity of having her by yourself and to yourself, and of

learning to know her, such as she is, really is. How much there lies at my heart with respect of the Wordsworths and Sara and how much of our common love and happiness depends on your loving those whom I love—why should I repeat? ¹ I am confident, my dear Love! that I have no occasion to repeat it.

Considering how long I have been here and how without a single interruption I have continued for three weeks to think of you with love and tenderness, and that this, I regard, as an omen of the future—I should like the child to be called *Crescelly* purely on the account, I have stated.

I will write again to-morrow—My dearest Love! with 10 thousand wishes and fervent prayer for you I am

Your faith. and aff. Husband

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 106

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Crescelly,

Thursday Morning, 7 o'clock,

Dec. 16, 1802.

MY DEAR LOVE

I write with trembling—at what time or in what state my letter may find you, how can I tell? Small need is there for saying, how anxious I am, how full of terrors and prayers! I trust in God, that this letter which I write with a palpitating heart, you will read with a chearful one—the new baby at your breast—O may God Almighty preserve you!

We leave this place in less than an hour. Our route lies thro' St. Clears, Carmarthen, Llandilo, Llandoverly, Tre-castle, Brecon, Hay, Hereford, Worcester, Birmingham, Litchfield, Abbots Bromly, Uttoxeter, Ashborn, Newbury, Buxton, Stockport, Manchester, Bolton, Preston, Garstang, Lancaster, Burton, Kendal, Ambleside, Keswick—346

¹ For details of Coleridge's affection for Sarah Hutchinson see an article, "Coleridge and Asra," T. M. Raysor, *Studies in Philology*, July, 1929, 305.

miles. From Keswick I must go with T. Wedgwood to Mr. Clarkson's, and so on to Luff's. I calculate that we shall not much exceed forty miles a day : and that we shall be at Ambleside, Thursday Evening, December 23rd—Mrs. Wilson will be so good as to have a fire kept in Peach's Parlour, and likewise in Peach's bedroom and great care taken that the bed and bedding shall be thoroughly warmed and aired. I should think it would be advisable to order immediately a pair of bed blankets from Miss Crosthwaite's. My dearest Love ! T. W. will not stay above a day or two in Keswick—and for God's sake do not let [him] be any weight or bustle on your mind—let him be entirely Mr. Jackson's visitor, and let a girl from the town come up for the time he stays—and Mrs. W. will probably accommodate you with a fowl or two—But above all, Mr. Jackson will be so good as immediately to write a line to be left for me at the Post Office, Kendal, informing me how you are—and *of all I am to know*. Any letters you may have written to Gunville will be sent back again to Keswick.

Mrs. Wilson will be so good as to procure a pound or so of the best salt potted butter which Mr. T. Wedgwood likes.

Again and again, my dear Love

God bless you

S. T. COLERIDGE.

If Mr. Jackson open this, he will, I am sure excuse the liberty I take with him, and accept of my best and kindest remembrances. And the same to dear Mrs. Wilson. I sent 50*l* Monday before last.

LETTER 107

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 99-101.]

Trecastle,

Friday night, December 17, 1802.

MY DEAR POOLE

Both T. Wedgwood and myself are sorry that we cannot congratulate you on your return to England, with

unmingled pleasure—But this d——d Dutch Ague—I pray God you may have Stoweyized it to the Devil—or back again to the low countries, which I should suppose a worse punishment for an Ague—unless indeed—like Milton’s Devils, it should move alternately from the fiery to the icy end of hell. And now let me defend myself against the charge of neglecting you—When your letter arrived at Keswick I was absent—out among the mountains on a fortnight’s tour—your letter came the very day I left home. Mrs. C. will bear witness for me, how vexed and wounded I was that a letter from you should have been a fortnight unanswered—and how immediatley and exclusively I set about answering it. I wrote you a *long*, and (for my head and heart were both full) not an ineloquent, or valueless letter—if it were at all in my character to set any price on my own compositions, I should *be* vexed that I had not taken a copy. I wished to do it—but did not, for eagerness to forward it to you. This letter *must* have arrived at your lodgings in Paris, the day you left it. Did you not pass thro’ Paris on your return? You yourself, my dear friend! are not wholly blameless in having stayed so long at Paris without writing to me. On receiving your second letter, I wrote to you at the Poste Restante, Geneva—not indeed immediately, but time enough in all conscience for it to have reached the place, before your arrival. This was a mere letter of affection, with a little effusion of old English *Gall contra Gallos*. It grieves me that you have not received these letters—because it does a friendship no *good* for a man to have felt resentfully, and *woundedly*, towards his friend, for 3 or 4 months—even tho’ he finds afterwards that he has wronged his Friend. Now of all earthly things I detest explanations—after the Day of Judgment there will be an end to them—*veniat regnum tuum*! And now for information respecting myself and our friend. I received on the 3rd of November a letter from T. Wedgewood, which, I felt, could be properly answered only by immediately going to him. I left Keswick the next morning—passed thro’ London to Bristol—Met T. W. at Cote—proceeded with him and Sally Wedgewood into Wales

—spent a week or so at St. Clears—and then to Crescelly, the Seat of Mrs. Wedgewood's Father, old Allen—where we passed the last 3 weeks in much comfort. Miss S. Wedgewood is a truly excellent woman ; her whole Soul is clear, pure, and deep, as an Italian Sky—Jessy, Fanny, and Emma Allen are all sweet girls—and Jessy and Fanny very interesting. W. had plenty of music and *plenty of cream* : for at Crescelly (I mention it as a remarkable circumstance it being the only place, I was ever at, in which it was not otherwise), *though* they have a Dairy, and *though* they have plenty of milk, yet nevertheless they are not at all stingy of it. In all other houses, where cows are kept, you may drink six shillings' worth of wine a day and welcome, but use three penny worth of cream, and O Lord ! the feelings of the household ! their looks would curdle the cream Dish ! I have never been able to understand or analyse this strange Folly ; it is a perfect mystery, that three penny worth of cream should be more costly than a shilling's worth of butter.¹

Our friend's Health is as nearly as possible what it was last Christmas—and I conceive, that he must go to a warmer climate sooner or later. He would not hesitate an hour, but that he feels that he is not likely to be happy, at a distance from, and out of reach of Josiah. He is determined to give England a fair Trial—and a scheme has started, which he thinks himself bound to act upon tho' the success of it, in it's first approaches, is extremely problematical. The Detail of it he will acquaint you with, as soon as he can ascertain any thing respecting it—and on this scheme he is now going straight onwards to Cumberland—and will return into South Wales, about the middle or perhaps end of January. It is a sense of Duty—no movement of pleasure—that impels him to the North, instead of to Stowey—according to our former plan. He has taken a Shooting Cottage at Trewern, 5 miles from Narberth, 13 from Crescelly, in Pembrokeshire—this afternoon as we were on our way from

¹ "C. used to be very fond of the *clouted cream*, eating more than my dairymaid thought sufficient. The reproof within is meant for her, *or me*." Note by Thomas Poole.

Llandovery to this place, he had a very serious fit indeed, brought on by long detention of indurate foeces—he is now relieved—but God Almighty shield him from a second. I should extremely dread an inflammation of the Bowels, as the consequence.

My own Health is certainly better than it was when you last saw me—much better. But it is far, very far from what it ought to be. My stomach is exceedingly weak—and all sort of food produces flatulence—and my Bowels are weak. I [have] every month an increasing necessity of austere diet—I have left off all wine, spirits, and fermented liquors—and I *try* to prefer solids to fluids, and animal food to Vegetable : simple food to seasoned I prefer naturally. But deep and pleasurable Tranquillity of Mind—and an even warmth of Body—are absolutely necessary for me, as far at least as Health is necessary. The latter I can gain only by settling in Sicily, or Teneriffe or the W. Indies—and this I should not hesitate concerning, if I could ensure the former, which you well know does not depend on myself. However, Mrs. C. and I go on with less of those habitual Ills that wear out life when two unequal minds meet in one house, and two discordant Wills—we have been at peace. I return home with a palpitating heart—for I expect to hear at Kendal, that I have a new child. From Keswick I shall write again ; But T. Wedgwood joins with me in begging and entreating that you will immediately write to him, or me, at Keswick—informing us, how you are—for *in very truth we are both anxious*. Give my love to Ward—to whom Mr. Wedgwood desires his friendly remembrance : and if Miss Ward is at Stowey, I send her my best good wishes—for she is of the better clay—there is a susceptibility of the good and the beautiful in her heart and mind.

God bless you, my dear friend ! I still believe, that I shall see you in a few months.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

We shall arrive at Keswick December 24th or 25th—God willing.

LETTER 108

To MISS MARY ROBINSON, *Englefield Cottage, Windsor.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, "Coleridge and Mrs. Mary Robinson," E. L. Griggs, *Modern Language Notes*, February, 1930.]

Greta Hall, Keswick, Dec. 27, 1802.

MY DEAR MISS ROBINSON

I was in Wales when your letter arrived ; and am even now returning to my home—The cause of the Delay in answering your Letter will be my Apology—If I were writing to a mere stranger, or to one with whose name I had connected nothing serious or interesting, it would be sufficient for me to say (and I could say it with strict Truth) that I have almost wholly weaned myself from the habit of making Verses, and for the last three years uninterruptedly devoted myself to studies only not *quite* incompatible with poetic composition—Poetic composition has become laborious and painful to me—The Gentlemen, with whose names you would wish to associate mine, are of such widely diffused literary celebrity, that no one will accuse me of a mock humility, or an affectation of modesty, when I say (confining my meaning exclusively to *literary* celebrity) that my name would place theirs in company below their rank—But I, you know, am not a man of the World ; and there are other qualities that I value infinitely higher than Talents, or the fame arising from them—among other things the use to which those Talents have been applied—Much solitude, and absence from cities and from the manners of cities, naturally make a man somewhat serious—and in this mood I cannot help writing to you—Your dear Mother is more present to my eyes than the paper on which I am writing ¹—which indeed swims before my sight—for I cannot think of your Mother without Tears—Let not what I say offend you—I conjure you, in the name of your dear Mother ! let it not do so—others flattered her, I admired her indeed, as deeply as others—but I likewise

¹ Mrs. Robinson (Perdita) died on December 26, 1800. Coleridge seems to have admired her tremendously. Her *Memoirs* and *Works* were published by her daughter in 1801.

esteemed her *much*, and yearned from my inmost soul to esteem her *altogether*—Flowers, they say, smell sweetest at Eve ; it was my Hope, my heartfelt wish, my Prayer, my Faith, that the latter age of your Mother would be illustrious and redemptory—that to the Genius and generous Virtues of her youth she would add Judgment and Thought—whatever was correct and dignified as a Poetess, and all that was matronly as Woman. Such, you best know, were her own aspirations—One of her poems written in sickness breathes them so well and so affectingly, that I never read it without a strange mixture of anguish and consolation—In this Feeling I cultivated your Mother's acquaintance, thrice happy if I could have soothed her sorrows, or if the feeble Lamp of my friendship could have yielded her one ray of Hope or Guidance—Your Mother had indeed a good, a very good, heart—and in *my* eyes, and in *my* belief, was in her latter life—a blameless Woman—Her memoirs I have not seen—I understood that an exceedingly silly copy of Verses, which I had absolutely forgotten the very writing of, disgraced one of the volumes¹—This publication of a private letter (an act so wholly unjustifiable, and in its nature subversive of all Social Confidence) I attributed altogether to the man, at whose shop the volumes were published—I was sorry, no doubt, that so very silly a Poem had been published—for your Mother's sake still more than for my own—yet I was not displeased to see my name joined to your Mother's. I have said everywhere and aloud that I thought highly both of her Talents and of her Heart, and that I *hoped* still more highly of both—I was not grieved at an occasion, which compelled me often to stand forth, as her Defender, Apologist, and Encomiast—But, my dear Miss Robinson ! (I pray you, do not be wounded—rather consider what I am about to say as a pledge of my Esteem, and confidence in

¹ The poem alluded to was *A Stranger Minstrel* (*Poems*, 350). The last few lines of this poem will serve to confirm Coleridge's judgment :

“ Thus spoke the mighty mount ! and I
Made answer, with a deep drawn sigh,
Thou ancient SKIDDAW ! by this tear,
I would, I would, that she were here.”

your honour and prudence, a confidence beyond the dictates of worldly caution)—but I have a wife, I have sons, I have an infant Daughter—what excuse could I offer to my conscience if by suffering my own name to be connected with those of Mr. Lewis, or Mr. Moore, I was the *occasion* of their reading the Monk, or the wanton poems of Thomas Little Esqre ?¹ Should I not be an infamous Pander to the Devil in the Seduction of my own offspring ? My head turns giddy, my heart sickens, at the very thought of seeing such books in the hands of a child of mine—I neither have or profess an excess of religious Faith or Feeling—I write altogether from the common feelings of common Honesty—The mischief of these misery-making writings *laughs* at all calculations—On my own account therefore I must in the most emphatic manner decline all such connection—But I cannot stop here—! Indeed, indeed, I write with Tears on my cheek—What, dear Miss Robinson, ought *you* to feel for yourself, and for the memory of a *Mother*—of all names the most awful, the most venerable, next to that of God ! On *your* conduct, on *your* prudence, much of her reputation, much of her justification will ultimately depend—Often and proudly have I spoken of you, as being in your manners, feelings, and conduct a proof of the inherent purity of your Mother's mind—Such, I am sure, you will always remain—But is it not an *oversight* and a *precipitancy*—is it not to revive all which Calumny and the low Pride of women (who have no other chastity than that of their mere animal frames) love to babble of your dear Mother, when you connect her posthumous writings with the poems of men whose names are highly offensive to all good men and women for the licentious exercise of their Talents ? It is usual in certain countries to plant the Night Violet on Graves because it sends forth its odours most powerfully during the Darkness, and absence of the sun—O dear Miss Robinson ! Exert your own Talents—do you plant the night violets of your own Genius and Goodness on the Grave of your dear Parent—not Hensbane, not Hemlock !

¹ A pseudonym adopted by Thomas Moore. Thomas Little's *Poetical Works* were published in London, 1801 *seq.*

Do not mistake me ! I do not suspect, that the Poems, you mean to publish, have themselves aught in the least degree morally objectionable ; but the *names* are those of men, who have sold provocatives to vulgar Debauchees, and vicious schoolboys—in no other Light can many of their writings be regarded by a Husband and a Father—As to Peter Pindar !¹ By all the Love and Honour I bear to your dear Parent's memory, by the anguish and the indignation at my inmost heart, I swear to you that my flesh creeps at his name !! You have forgotten, dear Miss Robinson ! Yes, you had altogether forgotten that in a published Poem he called an infamous and mercenary strumpet "*The Mrs. Robinson of Greece.*" Will you permit the world to say—her own Daughter does not resent it—her own Daughter connects the fame of her Mother with that of the man who thus assassinated her reputation ! No ! No ! I am sure you had forgotten it—I feel that I should insult you if I supposed the possibility of this Letter's being read by any but yourself—It has long been my intention to write a poem of some length expressly in honour of your Mother, which I meant to have addressed to you, having previously requested your permission—I mention this, merely to prove to you, how much I am interested in, how gladly I should assent to any plan, that I could think truly honorable to your Mother or yourself—

I remain most sincerely your friend and Wellwisher,
S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 109

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. A few lines published *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 101.]

Keswick, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 1802.

MY DEAR FRIEND

I have such a mass of letters to answer, that I can write you but a few lines. We arrived safely on Friday afternoon—and on the morning [Thursday Dec. 23] before at ½ past six, Mrs. Coleridge was brought to bed of a healthy

¹ Pseudonym for John Wolcot (1738-1819).

Girl, who is to be called Sarah. Both Mother and Babe are well. I am middling. My plans are these—it is probable, that I shall return with our Friend, either to Gunville or Treharne, and there employ myself for six weeks or 2 months—at the end of which time it is my firm resolution to go myself to the Canary Islands, and see them and know whether a comfortable House and the common Comforts of life are to be had in Gran Canaria or Teneriffe—if so, I shall return, and by the next vessel transport my family, myself, and my books. If not, I shall attempt to see Sicily and the South of Italy—for the same purposes. T. Wedgewood is much as usual—his spirits indifferent, his appetite tolerable. He leaves Keswick with me tomorrow morning, and goes to Ulswater—whether he returns to Keswick, or goes on to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, is uncertain. At all events, he means to have come back to the South before the last week of January. After I had last written you, and sent off the letter, my heart misgave me that I had written triflingly—and in a tone unworthy of you and of myself—in a first letter on your return to your native Country after your first absence—and that too on so unpleasant a necessity, and in ill-health to boot. But I was not writing for myself only—and this writing $\frac{1}{2}$ for myself, and $\frac{1}{2}$ as a kind of amanuensis untuned my feelings. I found your letter here : both T. W. and myself mourn, that your ill-health clings about you. I doubt not, I shall see you soon. As you know, I often joke with a Tear in my eye—so I could not help saying, that as your digestive organs were disordered, it was no wonder, that the Cream turned sour on your stomach. I received a letter from Sharp a few days ago with this Postscript—“ I like your friend, Poole, most exceedingly.” Sharp is a clever ready-cut-and-dried-speech-retailer and a friendly man who, tho’ he has no heart, has a neat thing enough of a cardioeidēs automaton, that answers all the purposes of a heart to all the demands and interests of simple acquaintanceship. As your Greek is not French or Latin or English, I must lexiconize *my* cardioeidons—which signifies something in the likeness of a Heart or puppet Heart.

What a misery that the Canarians are Catholics ! and the Devil sulphur-roast all Papists ! I would burn every Mother's child of them with Fire and Faggot in remembrance of what they did to us Christians in the time of bloody Queen Mary.

T. W.'s love. To Ward, and to his sister remember me kindly—And when you write to Bristol, do be so good as to remember me in more than common terms to your Sister and Mr. King.

God bless you, my dear Poole !
and
Your affectionate and faithful
S. T. COLERIDGE.

T. Wedgewood sent you a dozen Pound of Honey—at least, left word to have sent to you—before he left Gunville.

LETTER 110

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter has been badly mutilated. I have indicated the deletions.]

Glenridding, Jan. 5, 1803.

MY DEAR WIFE AND DEAR LOVE

I considered it as more than usually unlucky that the both times, that letters went from Grasmere to Keswick, I should have been in bed and *unfit* to write to you. I say *unfit*, because I was so low and so unwell, that if I had written, I must either have deceived or depressed you. And yet still I was vexed afterwards that I had not added one line or so—lest you should think me neglectful or unaffectionate, and heaven knows ! I burned up my best hopes on my attempt to conciliate your Love, and to call it forth into hourly exercise, and gentle compliance by setting you the example of respectful and attentive manners. We cannot get rid of our faulty habits all at once ; but I am fully sensible that I have been faulty in many things ; tho' justice to myself compels me to add, not without provocation. But I wish to confine my whole attention to my own faults, and it is my

hourly and serious resolve to endeavour to correct all little overflows of temper, and offensive vehemence of manners, look, language, and above all things never, never either to blame you, or banter you in the presence of a third person. On the other hand you must make up your mind to receive with love and a ready and docile mind anything that I say seriously and lovingly to you, when we are alone ! because my dear Love ! I must needs grow desperate, if I should find, that it is not only the *manner* of being found fault with

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encourage every thought and feeling that may tend to make me love you more and make a merit to myself of bearing with your little corrosions and apparent unimpressibilities. You are a good woman with a pleasing person, and a healthy understanding—superior certainly to nine women in ten of our own rank or the rank above us—and I will be not only contented but grateful if you will let me be quite tranquil—and above all my dear, dear Sara ! have confidence in my honor and virtue, and suffer me to love and to be beloved without jealousy or pain. Depend on it my dear Wife ! that the more you sympathize with me in my kind manners and kind feelings to those of Grasmere the more I shall be likely to sympathize with you in your opinions respecting their faults and imperfections. I am no idolater at present, and I solemnly assure you, that if I prefer many parts of *their* characters, opinions and feelings and habits to the same parts of yours, I do likewise prefer much, very much of your character to theirs— Of course I speak *chiefly* of Dorothy and William—because Mrs. Wordsworth and her sister are far less remote from you than they—and unless I am grievously deceived will in some things become less so still. God send us peace and love— My dear Love ! what a New Year's blessing it would be—O and surely it shall be— My heart is full of Hope and Love !

I walked on Sunday with William, Mary and Sara to John Stanley's to meet Dorothy—got wet in my feet, and half-forgetfull, half-stupid, suffered them to *smoke* and steam away while on my feet, holding them close by the fire.

I was not well when I came home as Dorothy informed you—indeed I was—
—which is 3 miles of the road—the whole distance being 13 miles ! but these 3 miles are almost as much on the other ten. I arrived safe and well. How I found T. Wedgwood and what his plans are I would rather tell you by word of mouth. I fear that I shall leave you in a week—perhaps less and go to Gunville. At all events, I must consult with Wordsworth on a very important subject—and then finally consult with you, and with you arrange it. I go therefore from hence to Grasmere tomorrow morning—and I shall *strive* to be at Keswick tomorrow night, and *possibly* may come in on a double horse, with Sara Hutchinson, whom I have *some few reasons* for wishing to be with you immediately—which I will inform you of—but one of the least, and yet the most ostensible is the necessity of one or more of her teeth being drawn without delay—for I never saw a human being's health so much affected *generally* by the tooth-ache as hers appears to be—yet this tooth-ache I suspect to be in part nerves—and the cause which I more than suspect, has caused this nervousness will return—I will tell you when I am alone with you. In one thing, my dear Love ! I do prefer you to any woman I ever knew. I have the most unbounded confidence in your discretion, and know it to be well-grounded. Mr. Wedgwood will certainly not come back to Keswick. O my dear Love ! I have very much to say respecting our children—indeed, indeed, some very vigorous and persevering measures *must* be taken—sitting up till 11 o'clock at night—coffee in the morning—etc., etc., etc.—and this for a child whose nerves are as wakeful as the strings of an Eolian Harp, and as easily put out of Tune ! Which—
Trash and general irregularity of Diet ! I know you will say that you were dieted, and yet had worms. But this is no argument at all—for first it remains to be proved that you were *properly* dieted—secondly it is as notorious as the sun in heaven, that bad diet will and does bring worms—and lastly, Derwent has been manifestly tea-poisoned as well as Hartley—and both of them are eat up by worms. Mary would not

say that Derwent had no tea given him—she only said, that he *had but little*. Good God ! what infatuation—as if a little child could know the difference between tea and warm milk and water—and out of mere laziness, because the tea is in the cup to give . . . and their mother—have twenty children. Tea—by favor of Agatha Fleming. . . .

[No ending or signature.]

LETTER III

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, Kingsdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Keswick, January 8, 1803.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

Your whole conduct to George Burnett ¹ has been that of a kind and truly good man. For myself I have no heart to spare for a coxcomb mad with vanity and stupefied with opium. He may not have a bad heart ; but he wants a good one. With much sorrow from without, much pain and disease, and not a little self-dissatisfaction and with some real distresses of valuable men in my immediate view, I verily can scarcely afford even to pity a fool. Yet better stars be with him ! I grieve sincerely that there should be such helpless self-tormentors ; though I cannot say that it adds much to my grief, that one of them is called George Burnett. At least if it does it is for his friends and not for his own sake.

Believe me, dear Southey ! your account of your improved health and eyesight was a real comfort to me. I love my Milton and will not endure any other poet's addresses to his blindness. Yet of the two fearful evils I would rather you went blind than stomach-deranged to any high degree. You know, dear friend ! of this latter and guess what it must be when in the excess in which T. Wedgwood has it. Your diet is, I am persuaded by my own experience, a wise one. I take the chalybeated Aqua-fortis with benefit and find considerable benefit from eating nothing at breakfast and taking

¹ George Burnett died in a workhouse in 1811. Southey made strenuous but vain efforts to rescue him from himself.

only a single cup of strong coffee—then at eleven o'clock I take a couple of eggs, kept in boiling water one minute, folded up in a napkin for a minute and a half and then put into the boiling water, which is now to be moved from the fire, and kept there with the same pan covered from 4 to 5 minutes, according to the size of the eggs and quantity of water in the saucepan. The superiority of eggs thus boiled to those boiled in the common way proves to me the old proverb—there is reason in roasting of eggs— I empty the eggs out into a tea-cup and eat them with a little salt and cayenne pepper—but no bread. What a pretty book one might write, entitled, 'Le Petit Soulagement', or Little Comforts by a Valetudinarian—comprising cookery, sleeping, travelling, conversation, self-discipline, poetry, morals, metaphysics—all the alleviations that reason and well-regulated self-indulgence can give to a good sick man— Sara sends her best love to you and Edith and Margaret, and she will write as soon as she has her strength. She is in a middling way, nothing to lament, nothing to boast of. The Sariala is well—save the thrush in her mouth of which I have noted nothing but that it does not sing, from whence I conclude that it is a different kind of thrush from the *Turdus communis*, of Thrastle of the South Countries. On the 30th of December I accompanied T. Wedgewood to Patterdale, at the head of Ullswater, to Mr. Luff's whom he has some thoughts, I believe, of getting as a companion. On New Year's day I walked over Kirkstone, an awful road over a sublime mountain by tairn and waterfall to Ambleside and Grasmere—the next day I walked more than half-way to Keswick to meet Miss Wordsworth, and back again, but, unfortunately, got wet in my feet, and on the day after Monday Jan. 3. in the evening I had an attack of Dysentery, in kind the same, in degree nearly equal to that which I had at Keswick when Stoddart and Edith were there. Dear Edith will remember it well. The same deadly sweat—the same frightful profusion of burning dregs, like melted lead, with quantities of bloody mucus from the water of the intestines. I was better after, and had a good night—and was so well the

next day, that I determined to perform the promise I had made, and accordingly walked back again to Mr. Luff's over Kirkstone, just 15 miles from Grasmere. I stayed Wednesday at Luff's ; and on Thursday Wedgewood seemed to have made up his plans, and I found I could go to my home for a week or so. But having something of importance to talk to Wordsworth about concerning Luff I was forced to go by Grasmere, but took a little pony and a woman to bring it back again to take me to the top of Kirkstone ; but before I got half way up the storm was so horrid and pitiless that the woman seemed frightened, and I thought it unmanly to let her go on. So I dismounted and sent her home with the storm to her back. I am no novice in storms ; but such as this I never before witnessed, combining the violence of the wind and rain with the intensity of the cold. My hands were shrivelled like a washerwoman's and the rain was pelted or rather slung, by the wind against my face, like splinters of flint and seemed to *cut* my flesh. On turning the mountain at the first step of descent all was calm and breathless. It seemed as if there was a great fountain of wind and tempest on the summit that rolled down a Niagara of air towards Patterdale. I arrived at Grasmere, soaked through, and the next day walked to Keswick. But in consequence of all this I have had another attack of dysentery, and am very poorly. I have been this prolix because it will give you a good idea of the nature of my health—and what a degree and scrupulousness of care it requires to ward off fits of distemper from my bowels. My plans are these, or rather Wedgewood's—to go to Gunville, to his brother's in about ten days, stay there a month or so, and then to go together to Paris, through Switzerland to Rome, Naples, and, perhaps, Sicily. I am indifferent. This is well and to stay at home would perhaps be better. God knows my heart ! it is for my wife's and children's sake that I go far more than for my own. Yet I could be well-content to try with great care, scrupulous diet and a perfect system of cloathing would do at Keswick. For I love the place with a perfect love. Next to Keswick I would live at Bristol beyond any other

place in the island, and of course I am glad that you are to live there. I have a great deal more to say ; but I am getting weak. The Ode on Switzerland ? O ! You must mean the old Ode, entitled France—which Stuart has reprinted.¹ As to my politics given in the Letters to Fox² and in the Essays on France,³ they are quite my own, and Stuart's *chiefly* in consequence of my conversation with him. So far from writing these letters under Stuart's influence, he kept them three weeks, afraid to publish them, and at last, did it roused to indignation by an account given him by one of Fox's warmest friends of Fox's conduct in Paris.⁴ As to Switzerland I know nothing, if you can procure me any information from King, I would thank you. You well know that all valuable information may [be] compressed into a very moderate letter. As to my Letters to Fox I wish you had read them—You would have seen that only a few conciliatory passages were Stuartian, but all the reprehensory parts I *myself* I. If I have erred, how gladly should I have it pointed out to me ! But men of all parties have read the Letters with a complete sympathy of faith, and what am I to understand by your remark, my dear Southey ? Have you heard anything from France, which inclines you to think favourably of Buonaparte, of the French Government or of Fox's apparent adulation ? But I shall write two or three more essays, and then collect them into a pamphlet, and so I shall have your opinion coolly. I heard of the *Edinburgh Review* and heard the name of your Reviewer but forgot it.⁵ Reviews may sell 50 or 100 copies in the first three months, and then their influence ends. Depend on it,

¹ *France : an Ode*, first published in the *Morning Post*, April 16, 1798 ; reprinted there, October 14, 1802. *Poems*, 243-247.

² *To Mr. Fox*, *Morning Post*, November 4 and 9, 1802. *Essays on His Own Times*, ii. 552-585.

³ "Comparison of the present state of France with that of Rome under Julius and Augustus Caesar," *Morning Post*, Sept. 21 and 25, and Oct. 2, 1802, *op. cit.*, ii. 478-514.

⁴ After the conclusion of the war with France, Fox went to Paris where he was received by Napoleon. Fox was bitterly criticized for his action.

⁵ Coleridge refers to the review of *Thalaba*, *Edinburgh Review*, i. 63, (October, 1802).

no living poet possesses the *general* reputation which you possess. Bloomfield in the *Farmer's Boy*¹ [is] not a poet in the mind of the public, and Rogers is never thought of though every school-girl has his pleasures of memory.² Wordsworth's reputation is hitherto sectarian. My *name* is perhaps nearly as well known and as much talked of as your's—but I am talked of as the man of talents, the splendid talker, and as a poet too, but not as you are, as a poet *κατ' ἔμφασιν*. I rejoice that *Madoc* is to be published speedily—God bless you—write to me here, and if I go your letter will be sent after me—and I will endeavour to write more lively—I am become a gentle and tranquillized being, but O Southey I am not the Coleridge which you knew me—S. T. C. My *affectionate esteem* to C. Danvers. God bless him !!

LETTER 112

To SAMUEL PURKIS, *Brentford, Middlesex.*

[Original letter, Huntington Library.]

*Southey's St. James's Parade, Kingsdown,
Bristol, Feb. 1, 1803.*

MY DEAR PURKIS

For the last 5 months of my Life I seem to have annihilated the present Tense with regard to place—you can never say, where *is* he?—but only—where *was* he? where *will* he be? From Keswick—to London—Bristol—Pembroke—Birmingham—Manchester—Keswick—Etruria—Bristol—and in a few days to Blandford—probably Stowey, Exeter—possibly, the Land's End. I am with Mr. T. Wedgwood—and expect after six weeks' stay with him in England to go thro' France, and Italy—and to winter in Sicily—but I am a Comet tied to a Comet's Tail, and our combined Path must needs be damnably eccentric, and a defying puzzle to all astronomers—from La Lande and Herschell to YZ, who with 20 more Alphabetonymists

¹ Robert Bloomfield (1766-1823) published his *Farmer's Boy* in 1800. The poem was tremendously successful.

² Samuel Rogers (1763-1855) published his best known poem, *The Pleasures of Memory*, in 1792.

likewise gave a solution to an astronomical problem in the last Lady's Diary.—If I had not gone with Wedgewood, or if I should not go, I shall probably go to Gran Canaria or Teneriffe—for my health is miserable. While in warm rooms, all goes well; but any exposure inevitably diseases, almost disorganizes me. Cold and wet are my He and She Devils. I am however *better* tho' not stronger for I abstain, and have for the last 4 months, from all wine, spirits, beer—and from all narcotics and exhilarants, whether from the vintner's Shop or the Apothecary: my appetite is very keen in consequence—but I am not stronger, nor at all more hardy. I shall shortly publish a second volume of Poems.¹

My Poverty, and not my Will consenting—I have likewise written a Tragedy and a Farce and have planned out a long comic Poem of regular and epic construction as long as Hudibras; but tho' with infinitely less wit, yet I trust with more humour, more variety of character, and a far, far more entertaining, and interesting Tale. Each book will be in a different metre, but all in rhyme—and each book a regular metre. It seems to me, that a comic Epic Poem lies quite new and untouched to me—Hudibras is rather a series of Satires than a comic Poem. My plan does not exclude the utmost beauty of Imagery and poetic Diction and some parts will be serious and pathetic. So much of myself—only let me add as interesting to dear Mrs. Purkis—that a day or two before last Christmas Day Mrs. Coleridge was safely delivered of a fine Girl, whom we have baptized Sara. My wife and all my children are well—

I write now to ask a little favour of you. There is a preparation of the Indian Hemp, called Bhang, or Bang, or Banghee—the same Drug, which the Malays take, and under it's influence, become most pot-valiant Drawean [?] run amuck, etc. My friend, T. Wedgewood, is exceedingly desirous to obtain a small specimen of it: from what he has heard of it, he conceives it possible that it may afford some

¹ The third edition of Coleridge's *Poems* (Longman and Rees) appeared in 1803; but no new poems were included. "A second volume of Poems" must refer to a plan which did not materialize.

alleviation to his most hopeless malady—which is a dreadful irritability of the intestinal canal. Now I know that Sir Joseph Banks¹ has a quantity of it—and if you should see him shortly, and could procure a small quantity of it—(you may mention, if you choose, for whom you want it—and Sir Joseph was an intimate Friend of old Mr. Wedgewood's, and no stranger to T. Wedgewood), you would oblige me greatly—For my poor Friend's Spirits are so very low, that he has no heart even to write half a dozen lines himself. O Purkis ! Purkis !—what an awful sight is this ; a man of Genius (I know not his superior) of exquisite and various Taste, of extensive Information and subtle and inventive faculties—active beyond example from nature—add to these most affectionate dispositions a man loving many, and beloved by many—deeply attached to a prosperous Family, who deserve and return his attachment, of deriving honors and cheering recollections from his noble Father, and crown all these things with a large Fortune, a fine person, a most benevolent Heart, which a calm and comprehensive and acute understanding organizes into genuine Beneficence—and what more can you think as constituent of compleat Happiness ! All these things unite in T. Wedgewood : and all these things are blasted by—a thickening of the Gut ! O God ! Such a Tree, in full blossom—it's fruits all medicinal and foodful—and a grub—a grub at the root !

I am sad to hear to T. Poole's Health ! O I yearn to be with him. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Purkis—and my best wishes attend your little ones. If you should succeed in your request, be so good as to send it by Coach to me, Josiah Wedgewood's Esqre, Gunville, Blandford, Dorset.

God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820) the scientist, had accompanied Captain Cook in the *Endeavour*. He was at this time president of the Royal Society.

LETTER 113

To TOM WEDGWOOD, *Cote House, Bristol.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. Vaughan Williams. Partly published in *Reminiscences* (Cottle), 458-459. For no apparent reason Cottle omits the references to the Chinese and India drawings.]

Nether Stowey, Bridgewater.
Thursday, February 10, 1803.

DEAR WEDGEWOOD

Last night Poole and I fully expected a few lines from you—and when the newspaper came in without it, we felt as if a dull Bore of a Neighbour had been ushered in after a knock of the Door, which had made us all rise up, and start forward to welcome some long-absent Friend. Indeed in Poole's case this Simile is less oversworn than in mine : for in contempt of my convictions and assurances to the contrary Poole (passing off the Brommagem Coin of his Wishes for sterling Reasons) had persuaded himself fully, that he should really see *you* in propriâ personâ. The truth is, we had no *right* to expect a letter from you, and I should have attributed your not writing to your having nothing to write, to your bodily dislike to writing—or (tho' with reluctance) to low spirits—but that I have been haunted with the fear, that your Sister is worse—and that you are at Cote in the mournful office of comfort to your Brother. God keep us from idle Dreams ! Life has enough of real pains.

I wrote to Capt. Wordsworth¹ about the Chinese or India Drawings, from 50£ to 100£—as you desired me—and desired him likewise to get me some Bang—Wordsworth, in an affectionate Letter, answers me—“ Mr. Wedgewood shall have the pictures if we return to bring them home. Indeed, I should find the greatest pleasure in serving or pleasing him in any thing. *But I hope, I shall be able to get some for him before we sail.* The Bang if possible shall also be sent : if any country ship arrives, I shall certainly get

¹ Coleridge was much devoted to Captain John Wordsworth, the younger brother of the poet. The news of the death of John Wordsworth, who was drowned on February 5, 1805, reached Coleridge at Malta, and he was deeply affected. (See *Letters*, ii. 494-495 and note).

it. We have not got any thing of the kind in our China Ships." Now the words *italicized* may perhaps not be what you wish. If so—if you would much rather that they should be brought by Wordsworth himself from China—give me a line, that I may write and tell him not to get any before he sails.

We shall hope for a letter from you to night—I need not say, dear Wedgewood, how anxious I am to hear the particulars of your Health and Spirits. On Saturday I had a Diarrhoea diarrhoeissima, et con furore, which continued on me for about 18 hours ; and left me, weak indeed, but free from rheumatic pain and the accompanying feverishness. I am now pretty well—if I continue as well, all will do !

Poole's account of his Conversations etc. in France are very interesting and instructive—If your inclinations lead you hither, you would be very comfortable here—but I am ready at an hour's warning, ready in heart and mind, as well as body and moveables—

With respectful remembrances and affectionate good wishes to your Brother and Sister

I am,

dear Wedgewood,

your's most truly ever

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 114

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, King'sdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

Bridgewater,

Feb. 15, 1803.

I arrived in safety—and after many days of anxious suspense have at length received a letter from T. Wedgewood, written in dreadful gloom of spirits, desiring me to go by myself to Gunville—and adding that he thinks my health incapacitates me for accompanying him to the Continent, whither he intends going in May. For myself, I should wish that he may continue to think so ; but as my health is rather better than what he knew it to be, when he last took me from

the North, expressly under the idea of going with him to Italy in the *middle of March*, I conclude that this last thought is the mere child of unusually low spirits, and that when I meet him at Gunville, he will recur to his former plan. Poor fellow ! my whole heart aches for him. If I went by myself I should go to Bordeaux. Bayonne over the Pyrenees to Bilbao, to Pampeluna—and so on, keeping as close under the Pyrenees as possible, to Perpignan and so into Italy—from Italy if the year permitted into Switzerland and pass my next winter at Nice. I go to Gunville on Friday next—but, probably, shall not reach it till Saturday. My address “ Josiah Wedgwood Esqr., Gunville near Blandford, Dorset, for Mr. Coleridge.” I understood you to say, that the Southernmost part of France was equally southerly, or more so, than the South of Spain. If I did not grossly misunderstand you, do, my dear fellow ! turn to a map of Europe, and stare a bit at the state of your geographical knowledge. I stared and doubted, as you must remember ; but gave up at last to you and Tom, being, indeed, on all occasions the humblest creature on earth. Spain in all its latitudes runs parallel with Italy and Sicily. Surely I must have misunderstood you—yet [if] so, I cannot imagine what the dispute could have been. I shall stay at Gunville from six [weeks] to two months, as I at present suppose. T. Poole is nearly well : his account of his travels and conversations in France and Switzerland are exceedingly interesting and instructive—he became acquainted with Reding, Zelviger, and the other Swiss Chieftains. He desires to be kindly remembered to you and to Mrs. Southey. We will take care that some [. . . ? . . .] shall be procured as soon as possible. You promised Poole the 2nd volume of the *Anthology*¹ which he has not received. My health is at its average. I had a *Διάρροια* diarrhaeissima, con furore.² . . . What a poor

¹ The second volume of the *Annual Anthology* (1800) contained a number of Coleridge's poems. The *Annual Anthology* was edited by Southey in 1799 and 1800 ; a third volume was projected but did not appear.

² Here follows some illegible Greek words (of which, however, *φλοισβος*, or some part of it, and *Σλισσλοσται* appear certain). Cf. *e.g.* Hom. *Il.* A 34.

syllable the Greek *phlosh-bosh* σκυτ is to our *squit*, and the Greek Σλισσλος is to our *Slishshlosh* !! It held upon me nearly eighteen hours, and left me weak indeed, but freed from rheumatic pains and feverishness. Since then I have been *pretty middling*, as the phrase goes ; I do not stir out of the house ; and as I have a delicious woodfire in my bedroom I am very comfortable here. A little boy, about nine years old, a sharp child waits on me. I dearly love to be waited on by children. A penny, and cheerful praise *mills* them like chocolate—Besides it is right and *isocratic*.

I promised to write to Mrs. Lovell from this place. But on reflection I find that I can write nothing from hence which I did not say to her at Bristol, and that I had better, of course, go first to Gunville, and see what can be done. Mrs. Coleridge suggests to me her apprehension that the circumstance of her having been on a stage may be an objection. I fear that it may—yet would to Heaven there were no greater. If only I could say with truth, that Mrs. Lovell is of a cheerful unrepining disposition and fond of children, I should not fear of success. But indeed, indeed, Southey ! it is necessary to impress on Mrs. Lovell's mind the conviction that all must ultimately depend on herself. If she could derive, from the thought that by her own exertion she was about to make herself truly independent, pleasure and a lightness and joyousness of heart, there can be little doubt that situations of some kind or other, and respectable ones, might be found. But if she goes into the affair with a predetermination to be offended, to meet with *Pride*, proud condescension, etc., etc., etc., what can be done ? Pride in a person, on whom I was really dependent, receiving without returning would be indeed intolerable to me, but pride in those, for whose guinea I still gave a guinea's worth, I should think little of, except to laugh at it. Those who feel very differently from me, must have a great deal of pride of their own ; and there the Query is, whether they are not as likely to *fancy* it, as to meet with it. Mrs. Lovell not understanding French and Drawing, or any of the ordinary governess accomplishments, it becomes more needful that I should speak warmly of her good sense

and prudent and irreproachable conduct (and this I can do with pleasure and satisfaction to myself) and of her sweetness of disposition and temper ; which how can I do ? If I do not succeed—if Mr. W. is provided, or Mrs. L. will not suit the place, and I can hear of no other, I assuredly, were I she, would advertise for a situation, either as a governess or as a companion. But again and again she ought to be sensible that unless she accord in her feelings all must be baffled.

Now for Keswick—I still think, that it will answer most admirably, that is to say, if there be only Edith and you, and the Passionate Pearl. Not that there will not be room for any visitors, you may have at any time, but inter nos, I know from Mrs. Coleridge that it would make her unhappy to live as House-mate with Mary, and loved and honoured as you will be, by some very good and pleasant people at Keswick, I should be sorry that such impressions should be blended with the feelings, which your brother will inspire not when he is by himself, but from his disrespectful and unbrotherly spirit of thwarting and contradicting you.¹ Indeed, I cannot help saying that I have not for a very long time met with a young man who has made so unpleasant an impression on my mind. But if you are only your own happy selves, I do warmly recommend you to go to Keswick. I shall certainly be absent—even if I live—two years. There will be a good Nursery-Room—and I should think that if the infants were healthy, the two mothers may very well contrive to do with one nurse-maid, and one house-maid. When the children are both awake at the same time, the mothers can take it by turns to take one child. You will have no furniture to buy, and all your books and if you choose yourselves too might go by water. And you might go to Lisbon from Liverpool. You would save at least £100 in the two years, and all the interest of the furniture money, and Mrs. Southey and Mrs. Coleridge will, I doubt not, be great com-

¹ Coleridge refers to Southey's brother, Lieutenant Thomas Southey, who was at home on leave at the time and apparently living with the Southseys. Southey's friendly letters to his brother (see *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*) fail to confirm Coleridge's charge of "an unbrotherly spirit".

forts to each other. Of course you being but three in family, you would live in common as Mrs. Southey would come to you in your study, whenever she wished to be alone with you. The annual expences of the whole family, servants and everything will be short of £200—so that you will live house rent and all, for a little more than £100 a year. You are paying half at least of your whole Keswick expenses at your present house. N.B. I would by no means thwart Bella's wish to stay in Bristol: but on the contrary encourage her. She will not be happy at Keswick. Before I leave England, I shall, if my phiz. will pass muster make myself a member of the Equitable Insurance Society, and by an annual payment of £27 during my life ensure £1000 to Mrs. C. at my death. I fear I must *rouge* a little— God love you and S.T. Coleridge. Kisses to the Pearl and remembrances— P.S. If the Equitables won't pass me, I shall ask Mr. Wedgwood to allow me 120£ instead of 130£ during Mrs. Fricker's life, and after death 100£, and to allow Mrs. Coleridge £50 or £60 a year after my death. I do not like this, simply because I could ask if only for Mrs. C.'s *widowhood*; whereas nothing would give me greater pleasure on my death bed, than the probability of her marrying a second time, happily.

LETTER 115

To TOM WEDGWOOD.

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. Vaughan Williams. Published, with omissions, *Reminiscences*, 463.]

Nether Stowey,

Thursday, February 17, 1803.

MY DEAR WEDGEWOOD

Last night I received a four ounce parcel-letter by the Post, which, Poole and I concluded, was the mistake or carelessness of the Servant, who had put the parcel, your Sister gave him, into the *Post* office instead of the *Coach* office. I *should* have been indignant, if dear Poole's *Squint* of Indignation had not set me a laughing. On opening it it contained my letter from Gunville, and a parcel, a small

one, of *Bang* from Purkis. I will transcribe the parts of his letter which relate to it—but I have been harassed by the apprehension that you may be vexed with Purkis's having mentioned your name—¹

Now I had better take the small parcel with me to Gunville. If I send it by the Post, besides the heavy expence, I can not rely on the Stowey Carriers of Letters, who are a brace of as careless and dishonest Rogues, as had ever claims on that article of the Hemp and Timber Trade, called the gallows. Indeed, I verily believe that if all Stowey (Ward excepted) does not go to Hell, it will be by the supererogation of Poole's sense of Honesty. *Charitable!*

We go off early tomorrow morning. I shall hear from you of course. Respectful Remembrances to the Family at Cote. We will have a fair Trial of *Bang*— Do bring down some of the Hyoscyamine Pills, and I will give a fair Trial of Opium, Hensbane, and Nepenthe. By the bye, I always considered Homer's account of the *Nepenthe* as a *Banging Lie*—

God bless you,
My dear Friend,
and S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 116

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, Kingsdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

*Bridgewater,
February 17, 1803.*

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I received your letter at ten o'clock last night. It occasioned me a restless night. Partly I was greatly oppressed to think that there should hang such weights from your wings—and partly I harassed myself by the apprehension

¹ Here Coleridge adds a transcript of the letter from Purkis. In the light of Coleridge's apprehension that Wedgwood will be vexed at the mention of his name, it will be amusing to refer to Coleridge's letter to Purkis of February 1, 1803, No. 112, in which Purkis is authorized to use Wedgwood's name.

that I had expressed myself abruptly in my last letter, and not with sufficient delicacy as to your living at Keswick—making previous *conditions* as in a bargain. But I was heavy with thought and with *want* of sleep, though not with the desire of it, and one is apt to say bluntly what must be said and cannot be said without pain. I feel myself awkwardly situated; I shall either be guilty of a breach of confidence to Mrs. Coleridge, or I must request of you not to mention what I say to Mrs. Southey, and I am not certain that this latter is not in the teeth of your marriage-code. But now Mrs. Coleridge, who would be too happy, as the phrase [goes], if you and Mrs. Southey and the Pearl were with her, has most expressly in a letter to me declared that she will not live with Mrs. Lovell, nor with Tom. This last article is not altogether in consequence of the opinion and feelings I expressed to her, respecting him and his unbrotherly manner to you; but from the necessity of an additional servant, and the consequent crowding of the house to which Mr. Jackson has objected, for his own quiet's sake and to which Mrs. C. objects for her own. Assuredly, I have no right to do anything that will in the least degree diminish Mrs. Coleridge's comforts and Tranquillity. In an evil hour for me did I first pay attention to Mrs. Coleridge, in an evil hour for me did I marry her, but it shall be my care and my passion that it shall not be an evil day for her, and that whatever I may be, or may be represented, as a Husband, I may yet be unexceptionable as her Protector and Friend.

O dear Southey! I am no clue! [?] I am a crumbling wall, undermined at the foundations! Why should the vine with all its clusters be buried in my rubbish? As to my returning to Keswick, it is not to be calculated on. I advise you, at all events, to emancipate yourself—Allow Mrs. Lovell £20 a year, till she can get a situation; and let her live in some family, where she will make herself in some way useful, so as to make up for the small allowance. If nothing better can be done (and I will try my very utmost) do this—but I conjure you, at all events, and whatever it cost you, to Emancipate yourself. Good Heavens! what a shocking thing

that there should be such unnecessary canker-worms in your happiness ! You only need a little courage to give a little pain. You are happy in your marriage and Life ; and greatly to the honour of your moral self-government, moralities and manners are pleasant to, and sufficient for, you to which my nature is utterly unsuited : for I am so weak that warmth of manner in a female house mate is as necessary to me, as warmth of internal attachment. This is weakness, but on the other hand I ought to say in justice to myself, that I am happy and contented in solitude, or with the common inhabitants of a bachelor's house : an old woman, and a sharp child. But you, who want nothing to be happy—who are prevented from happiness and consequent greatness only by unnecessary Appendages— I cannot endure to think of it. Go to Keswick, or to the South of France—first completely clear yourself, and then live within your income and do nothing but great works. My disease is probably anomalous. If it can be called anything, by a lucky guess, it may be called irregular scrophulous gout. But as to King's notion that if it be irregular gout, change of climate is no remedy—this is in the teeth of every medical writer of note on the gout, who have all prescribed hot climates for gouty people—and what weighs more with me in the teeth of particular facts in my own knowledge. Besides what gouty medicines are there that I have not used ? What gouty regimen ? Have I not wholly abandoned wine, spirits, and all fermented liquors ? and taken Ginger in super-abundance ? 'Tis true I have not taken Dr. Beddoes' North Fruit—nor do I intend to do it. What can I want more decisive than my own experience—in hot rooms I am well—in hot weather I am well—cold, wet, and change of weather uniformly disease me. It is astonishing how well I was three *hot* weeks in last summer ! A cold rain came on, and I was ill as instantly as if it had poisoned me. I should be an ideot, if I wished anything more decisive than this. My disease, whatever it may be called, consists of an undue sensibility with a deficient irritability—muscular motion is languid with me, and venous action languid—my nerves are unduly vivid, the consequence is a natural ten-

dency to obstruction in the glands—etc., because glandular secretion requires the greatest vigor of any of the secretories. My only medicine is an universal and regular stimulus. Brandy, Laudanum etc., etc., make me well during the first operative ; but the secondary effects increase the cause of the disease. Heat in a hot climate is the only regular and universal stimulus of the external world ; to which if I can add the tranquillity the equivalent and Italian climate of the world within, I do not despair to be a healthy man.

When I shall see you I cannot tell—certainly not for 5 weeks. I go to Taunton on Friday, and leave it on Saturday morning at 5 o'clock. I shall be at Gunville on Saturday Evening. Josiah Wedgwood is High Sheriff of the County. You will see by my letter that T. Wedgwood wrote to me what Tobin told you. Selfishly speaking I should wish he might continue of that mind, but I love and honour him so much, that on the whole I do not wish it. For I am desirous above all things that he should make the fair trial of a good climate, which he cannot do unless he has both a field companion with him, and a man who in the sum of his faculties is his equal and one who is with him purely from affectionate esteem—

Do not mind the Cid. I do not think I shall be able to do anything in the poetry line.

God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Poole's kind remembrances, and will send you Laver [?] quam citissime. I have opened the letter to beg that you will procure me from King a bottle of the red sulfat [sulphate ?], and one of the compound acid, and to send them well secured to Mr. J. Wedgwood, Cote for me ; and this must be within a week.

LETTER 117

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, Kingsdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Gunville, Blandford, Dorset.

Thursday, Feb. 24, 1803.

DEAR SOUTHEY

I have delayed writing in expectation of a letter from you ; and I still hope that I shall receive one this evening, and shall therefore send this letter by tomorrow's Post. I left Stowey with Poole on Friday morning : instead of taking a Post Chaise and arriving at Gunville the same evening Poole *would* hire a one horse chair (that Pandora box of accidents) and all happened as I most minutely foretold—breakings down, delays, wettings and arrival at Gunville late on Sunday afternoon. Here I shall remain a month at least. I need not say, that I am up to my chin in comforts.

And now for Mrs. Lovell. It is as I feared. Mr. Wedgwood had already opened a negotiation for a governess. I have felt the less—at least the less immediate regret—from this circumstance, because I seem to have perceived that Mrs. L. and the Wedgwoods would not have suited each other. Indeed Mr. W. layed such *stress* and so repeatedly on good and even temper and good and even spirits, that I could not have had the courage to have said anything about it. And I think it possible to meet with situations, where the governess lives on more familiar terms with the master and mistress of the family. I have it in my mind to write to Dr. Crompton.

My health is as the weather is : and my spirits low indeed.

I do not feel convinced that the block-stamping of coins had any connection whatever with the discovery of printing. If this could have led to it, sealing letters with engraved seals, would have done it some 20 centuries before, and common coinage of money would have done it. There is no strength in the affair in my mind unless the whole process can be traced historically nay more, with legal evidence such as is used and held valid in quashing a Patent.

In the early parts of your History be careful to collect with care all that can be known, and all that can even be guessed about the dresses, manufacture, commerce, domestic habits, and modifications of the feudal government—or else your History will have the air and the character of a story-book. You do not need the advice, I almost know; but *needless* advice is no very unpleasant thing in a world, where there is such plenty of *useless* advice.

The letters are come in. I had no other particular wish to hear from you at present, than what arose from the apprehension that [what] I had written concerning Keswick might have wounded you. Yet as to the *matter* at least it is impossible that I could with propriety write otherwise.

But I am in no spirits to talk of these things. Hartley has had both the scarlet fever and the croup. He is tolerably well at present; but my mind misgives me, that I shall never see him more.

God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 118

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, Kingsdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Blandford.

Saturday Night, 12 o'clock. March 12, 1803.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I received your letter this evening and was glad to receive it. Before I speak of its contents, let me refer to a former letter. You surely misunderstood my argument respecting the coins. I laid no stress on the figures, but I concluded that if stamping coins with *texts* was printing, stamping metal medals with figures and inscriptions, (many of them *long inscriptions*) was printing, every seal with words in it was a species of printing. You say that the figures led to the texts. So be it! But still you have to prove that this led to *our printing* or had anything to do with it. Between these stereotypes and movable types there is as great a distance as between, I will not say picture writing and

alphabetical language, for that would be too much—but *precisely* as great as between the Chinese character language and Alphabetical language. That coins and seals did not lead the Greeks and Romans to printing, first their laws and then their great authors, (Homer etc.), by stereotypes does appear strange. Luck and accident must be taken into the account, though it is impossible to ascertain the degree and weight of their action ; but I think that the multitude of slaves and the circumstance that the manuscript trade was in the hands of the wealthiest nobles, will of itself account for the phenomenon. What instrument for shortening field-labour was ever invented in the West Indies ? There were none in Europe till the commercial feeling extended itself to agriculture. Your prophecy concerning the *Edinburgh Review* did credit to your penetration. The second number is altogether despicable ; the humdrum of pert attorneys' clerks, very pert and yet prolix, and dull as a superannuated judge. The passage you quote has been a slang quotation at Gunville for the last week. The whole pamphlet on the ' Balance of Power ' is below all criticism ; and the first article on Kant, you may believe on my authority, to be independent and senseless babble. I rejoice at your account of Ritson's book.¹ Do you read Italian ? Whether or no, for there exists a good old English translation, I conjure you to read through the historical and political works of Machiavel. I prefer him greatly to Tacitus.

Now for myself. T. Wedgwood arrived here the Tuesday before last, hopeless, heartless, planless. There seemed to be no thought at all of my accompanying him, and I accordingly settled everything for going without him. On Sunday last, I wrote to London to make inquiries for him respecting a young man who has been lately on the continent, for his companion : for his objections to me were, my health and my ignorance of French and Italian, and the absolute necessity

¹ Joseph Ritson (1752-1803). It is probable that Coleridge refers to Ritson's, *Bibliographia Poetica : a Catalogue of English Poets of the Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Centurys, with a short Account of their Works*, or his *Ancient Engleish Metrical Romancees*, both of which were published in 1802.

of his having someone to take the whole business of the road off his hands. Yet still he could not bear to come to the point, and Jos. was anxious, I believe, that Tom should not go without me. However on Wednesday, Jos. came to me and said that T. W. could not bear the idea of losing me, that he would dismiss his present servant, and at any price produce a cap à pie accomplished travelling gentleman's servant etc. and that we would go together to London on Monday March 14, and to France as soon as the servant was procured. And of course I assented, for I had promised that till the second week of April I would be at his service, and that I would accomodate myself to his resolutions however rapidly changed or nakedly communicated. All being then *settled*, *pounce!* comes this damned War business!¹ However, we still go on Monday. Josiah Wedgwood goes with us. He has a dish and address to present as High Sheriff. Where I shall be I do not know, for there is no bed for me at York Street. However a letter will find me there—"Messrs. Wedgwood and Byerley: York Street, St. James' Place, London"; and I *entreat* you, mention to no soul alive that I am in London, and communicate no part of this letter to Tobin.

You would greatly oblige me if you would immediately gain from Mr. King or Dr. Beddoes, where in London I can procure a bottle of the gout medicine. I admire Dr. Beddoes part of the pamphlet very much. It is far superior to the *Hygeia*² in style and reasoning. And yet with the

¹ Early in March, 1803, England not only refused to hand over Malta to France, as provided by the Peace of Amiens, but fearing the aggression of Napoleon the militia were called out and war was imminent, although the actual declaration did not come until May 18.

The threat of war terminated Tom Wedgwood's plan to have Coleridge accompany him to the Continent. War, however, not being immediately declared, on March 25, 1803, Tom Wedgwood, having chosen Underwood for a companion, crossed to Calais. As R. B. Litchfield says "the plan of joint travel [was] a hopeless one at best, for two sick men of such abnormal tempers as Coleridge and Wedgwood." *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, 1903, 140.

² *Hygeia or Essays Moral and Medical on the Causes affecting the Personal State of Our Middling and Affluent Classes*, Thomas Beddoes, 1802-1803.

exception of the Essay on Mania, the Hygeia is a valuable and useful work. Indeed, when I think how Beddoes bestirs himself I take shame to myself for having suffered tittle-tattle stories respecting him to warp my personal feelings ; especially as to me he has always behaved with uncommon kindness. I do think that Tobin's¹ maxim of conduct is wise and good,—“ always keep on the best terms you can with an acquaintance as long as, and, in proportion as, he is an active and useful man ; and this not only in your outward demeanour, but in your inner feelings.”

I wish from my heart's heart that you were at Keswick and that Mary were pensioned off. My heart bleeds for her often : in my deepest conviction her real misfortune is her heart and temper. Could I have dared answer Wedgwood's question in the affirmative—“ Is she kind ? gentle ? of a sweet and affectionate temper ? ” I will not disguise from you that I could have procured the situation for her, and she would never, never have been abandoned by them. But in proportion as Mr. and Mrs. Wedgwood are delightful in their own domestic character, the children delightful, and their intentions to a governess who should prove another mother and guardian to the children, in the highest degree liberal and grateful ; in the same proportion, you feel, that I could not dare recommend anyone without my warmest and sanest convictions. Indeed it would have been as silly as wicked, for their penetration is fully equal to their goodness of heart. Would to heaven you were at Keswick. Wordsworth means to reside half a mile from it, and you and he would agree far better now than you might perhaps have done four or five years ago. And he is now fonder of conversation and more open.

Kiss the Pearl—the dispassionate Pearl for me. Little darling ! I have a father's heart for all of her age ; how much more for a child of yours, linked together as we have been by good and evil, pleasures and pain ! Would to God, to

¹ “ John Tobin the dramatist (or possibly his brother James), with whom Coleridge spent the last weeks of his stay in London, before he left for Portsmouth on the 27th of March, [1804], on his way to Malta,” *Letters*, ii. 460.

God that in *one* thing, in which I am most unlike, that I were like you altogether ! But the time is past.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 119

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Three lines published *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 115. Four lines, *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters*, xii. 293 (1930).]

Keswick, May 20, 1803.

MY DEAR POOLE

Since Good Friday [Apr. 8] the time of my arrival at Keswick, I have been not only very ill—and for a large part of the time actually bed-ridden—but the Disorder seized in my head in such a way, that the very idea of writing became terrible to me. It was the influenza, which shewed itself in the form of rheumatic Fever—crippling my loins—but distinguished from it by immediate prostration of strength, confusion of Intellect on any attempt to exert it, a tearing Cough with constant expectoration, and clammy honey-dew Sweats on awaking from my short sleeps. I am now only somewhat better and feel the infinite Importance, of the deepest Tranquillity. It has been an inconceivable comfort to me during my illness that when in London I had made myself a member of the Eq.Ass. Society for 1000*£*, which cost me 31*£*—but henceforward it will only be 27*£*. I made my will too, bequeathing the Interest of the Sum to Mrs. C.—and after her Death the Sum itself to my Daughter if she be alive ; if not, to my two boys or the one who is alive. I ventured without writing you to take the liberty of leaving the money to you in trust—and in case of your Death, to Wordsworth. But I shall employ the first months of my returning Health in arranging my MSS., to be published in case I should be taken off—and I will send you instructions with respect to my Letters etc.—which should be collected—and I shall leave it entirely to you and Wordsworth to choose out of them such as with necessary omissions, and little corrections of grammatical inaccuracies may be

published ; but if God grant me only tolerable Health this summer, I pledge myself to all who love me, that by next Christmas the last three years of my Life shall no longer appear a Blank. I wish exceedingly that you could come to me this Summer, or Autumn—and God knows my heart, I *wish* very few things.

Dear Poole ! in the present Instance I have been incapable of writing to you ; but at no time judge of my affection and esteem by the frequency or infrequency of my Letters. While I live, I shall always hold you dear in the first degree.

Farewell

S. T. COLERIDGE.

At one time every Soul in my house was confined to bed, and we were tended on by strange faces. Many have died of the complaint in and about Keswick, and no one has been quite as well since as before. Love to Ward. Mrs. Coleridge's Love to you.

LETTER 120

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter refers to Coleridge's scheme to collaborate with Southey in the production of a work to be called *Bibliotheca Britannica or an History of British Literature, bibliographical, biographical, and critical*. The plan, as Southey pointed out was "too good, too gigantic, quite beyond my powers" ; and he went on to say that he knew better than to "rely upon you [Coleridge] for whole quartos !" See *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, ii. 218, 219, and 221.]

Monday Evening, August 1, 1803.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND

On whatever plan you determine I will be your faithful servant and fellow-errant. If you were with me and health were not far away, I could now rely on myself, but my health is a very weighty, perhaps insuperable objection. Else the sense of responsibility to my own mind is growing deeper and deeper with me from many causes, chiefly, from the knowledge that I am not of no significance, relatively to, comparatively with other men, my contemporaries. I was thought *vain*—if there be no better word to express what I was, so let it be ; but if Cottle be *vain*, Dyer vain, J. Jennings

be *vain*, the word is a vague one. It was in me, the heat, bustle and overflowing of a mind, too vehemently pushed on from within to be regardful of the objects upon which it was moving; an instinct to have my power proved to me by transient evidences, arising from an inward feeling of weakness, both the one and the other working in me unconsciously; above all a faulty delight in the being beloved without having examined my heart, whether if beloved, I had anything to give in return beyond general kindness, and general sympathy, both indeed unusually warm, but which being still *general*, were not a return in kind, for that which I was unconsciously desiring to inspire. All this added together might possibly have been a somewhat far worse than vanity, but it would still have been different from it; far worse if it had not existed in a nature where better things were indigenous— A sense of weakness, a haunting sense that I was an herbaceous plant, as large as a large tree, with a trunk of the same girth, and branches as large and shadowing, but with pith within the trunk, not heart of wood—that I had power not strength, an involuntary impostor, that I had no real Genius, no real depth. This on my honor is as fair a statement of my habitual haunting, as I could give before the tribunal of Heaven. How it arose in me, I have but lately discovered; still it works within me, but only as a disease, the cause and meaning of which I know. The whole History of this feeling would form a curious page in a *nosologia spiritualis*. Your other objection is not equally well-founded. My plan would take in all and everybody. I undertake for this, that every page which your plan would admit, mine should; neither is it accurate, that the greater part could only be done by me. However I give it up as contentedly as I offered it quietly. If any part I should desire you to retain, it would be the first volume, to make that exhaust all Welch, Saxon and Erse Literature. However, let me know as soon as is convenient your plan, whatever it be. Good Heavens! if you and I, Rickman¹ and Lamb, were to put our shoulders to

¹ Coleridge admired Rickman tremendously. Rickman saw a good deal of the Poet just prior to the latter's departure for Malta early in 1804.

one volume, a complete History of the Dark Ages—if Rickman would but take the physics, you the romances and legendary theology, I the metaphysics, and Lamb be left to say what he liked in his own way—what might not be done? As to the Canon and Roman Law, it is done admirably for all countries by Hugo of Göttingen, and I could abridge his book. This alone would immortalize us. In physics I comprehend alchemy and medicine. Enough of all this. I write only to say, that my zealous and continued services are yours on *any* plan; tho' as to Longman, I have assuredly a right to demand more than four guineas a sheet for the copy-right of so complete a work as my Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespear, Milton, Taylor, etc., etc. will be—without boasting, a great book of criticism respecting poetry and prose. He ought to consider, that every syllable which I shall write in the work is not for that work merely, but might every page be published in a work per se, etc., etc.

If no strange accident intervene, I leave home on Monday next for my Scotch Tour.¹ We shall be five or six days getting to Glasgow, and after that I know no place of direction but Edinburgh. If therefore you wish to write within a day or two, direct to the Post Office, Glasgow; if not, I shall expect a letter in a month or five weeks at Edinburgh.

We are all pretty well. Sara is a quiet creature, Derwent a great beauty, both sadly nettle-rashy; but I am afraid to do anything with it, it seems to keep them both in high health. Hartley is his own self—*piscis rarissima*—

Young Hazlitt has taken masterly portraits of me and Wordsworth,² very much in the manner of Titian's portraits. He wishes to take Lamb and yours.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Coleridge and the Wordsworths did not actually start on their Scotch tour until Monday, August 15. Cf. Letter 122, dated August 14, 1803, to Robert Southey, and Letter 127, dated October 2, 1803, to George Coleridge.

² Both of these portraits have disappeared. (On the authority of Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, who has kindly supplied information relative to the letter to the Wordsworths of August 6, 1803.)

LETTER 121

To WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

[From a transcript of the original letter kindly sent me by Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, who contributed the annotations enclosed in quotation marks in the following footnotes.]

Saturday, [August 6, 1803.]¹

MY DEAREST WILLIAM

You would be as much astonished at Hazlitt's coming, as I at his going. Sir G. and Lady B.² are half-mad to see you—(Lady B. told me, that the night before last as she was reading your Poem on *Cape Rash Judgment*,³ had you entered the room, she believes she should have fallen at your feet). Sir G. B. and his wife both say, that the Picture⁴ gives them an idea of you as a profound strong-minded Philosopher, not as a Poet. I answered (and I believe, truly—) that so it must needs do, if it were a good Portrait—for that you were a great Poet by inspirations, and in the moments of revelation, but that you were a thinking feeling Philosopher habitually—that your Poetry was your Philosophy under the action of strong winds of Feeling—a sea rolling high.

What the devil to do about a Horse! I cannot hear of one (Keswick is not the Place) and Mr. Moore has sent me a Letter which makes it scarcely possible for me to buy the Jaunting Car under 15£. He expresses the utmost sorrow, that his finances relatively even to mine would make it unjust and pusillanimous in him to give way to his habitual Feeling, which would impel him to insist on my accepting it—that he had repeatedly refused 15£, but that I might deduct from

¹ "This letter was certainly written from Greta Hall, probably on Saturday, August the 6th, 1803."

² "Sir George and Lady Beaumont stayed some weeks at Keswick at this time, but the Wordsworths did not make their acquaintance until later." Sir George Beaumont (1753-1827), the landscape painter, was a devoted patron of Coleridge and Wordsworth. In 1806-1807 the Wordsworths lived for several months in a house at Coleorton (loaned them by Beaumont) and were visited there by Coleridge and little Hartley.

³ Cf. *Poems on the Naming of Places*, IV. *Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* (Oxford) 148-149.

⁴ i.e. the portrait by Hazlitt.

that what I chose. Dearest dearest dearest Friends—I will have 3 dearests, that there may be one for each (and Godson John¹ shall have one for himself)—I begin to find that a Horse and Jaunting Car is *an anxiety*—and almost to wish that we had adopted our first thought, and *walked*: with one pony and side saddle for our Sister Gift-of-God. I was on horse just now with Sir G. and Lady B.—when Lord Lowther² came riding up to us—so of course all dismounted—and he is now with his Jockey Phiz in with Sir G.— But I looked at him, and gave him a downright and heart-deep kind feeling for behaving honestly to all you.

Lady Beaumont—I can describe her to you in few words—She is a miniature of Madame Guion, a deep Enthusiast, sensitive, Trembles and cannot keep the Tears in her eye. Such ones do love the marvellous too well not to believe it. You may wind her up with *any* music, but *music* it must be, of some sort or other.

I have not as yet received anything from Fletcher³ (but the Side-Portrait) which I shall prize deeply. I am quoad health in excellent Trim for our Journey—foot or horse. The children are all well, and Sara is an engaging meek Baby. Yesterday evening we had a *Cram*—Mrs. Wilkinson, General and Mrs. Pechè, and two Andersons, Mrs. Dawber and Miss Hodgins. Mrs. Wilkinson *swears* that your Portrait is 20 years too old for you—and mine equally too old, and too lank—every single person without one exception cries out! What a likeness! but the face is too long! You have a round face!—Hazlitt knows this; but he will not alter it. Why? because the Likeness with him is a secondary consideration—he wants it to be a fine Picture. Hartley knew yours instantly—and Derwent too, but Hartley said—it is very like; but Wordsworth is far handsomer. Our Mary says—it is very *leek*, but it is not canny enough,

¹ “ Godson John Wordsworth was born on the 18th of June, 1803.”

² “ The notorious Earl of Lonsdale had died in June, 1802, and Lord Lowther, who succeeded him in the estates but not in the Earldom, had discharged the debts of his predecessor to the Wordsworth family in full with accrued interest.”

³ “ The carrier between Grasmere and Keswick.”

though Mr. Wordsworth is not a *canny* man, to be sure. She thinks Mr. Cock's face, I believe, the ideal of Beauty, but you and I, dear William, pass for an ugly Pair with the lower orders, which I protest, Dorothy will not admit. The true defects of it as a likeness are that the eyes are *too open and full*—and there is a heaviness given to the forehead from parting the Hair so greasily and pomatumish—there should have been a few straggling hairs left. Hazlitt's paints are come from London. God love you all, W. D. M. + Dearest John.

[No signature.]

LETTER 122

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *St. James' Parade, Kingsdown, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Sunday, Aug. 14, 1803.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

Your letter affected me very deeply. I did not feel it so much the two first days, as I have since done. I have been very ill, and in serious dread of a paralytic stroke in my whole left side. Of my disease there now remains no shade of doubt—it is a compleat and almost heartless case of atonic Gout. If you would look at the article 'Medicine' in the *Encycl. Brit* : Vol. XI. Part I. No 213, p. 181, and the first 5 paragraphs of the second column you will read almost the very words, in which before I had seen this article I had described my case to Wordsworth. The only non-agreement is—"an imaginary aggravation of the slightest feelings, and an apprehension of danger from them". The first sentence is unphilosophically expressed—there is a state of mind, wholly unnoticed, as far as I know, by any physical or metaphysical writer hitherto, and yet which is necessary to the explanation of some of the most important phenomena of sleep and disease—it is a transmutation of the *succession* of time into the *juxtaposition* of space, by which the smallest impulses quickly and regularly recurrent *aggregate* themselves and attain a kind of visual magnitude with a

correspondent intensity of general feeling. The simplest illustration would be the *circle* of Fire made by whirling round a live coal—only here the mind is passion. Suppose the same effect produced ab intra, and you have a clue to the whole mystery of frightful dreams and hypochondriacal delusions (I merely hint this, but I could detail the whole process complex as it is). Instead of an imaginary aggravation etc., it would be better to say “an *aggregation* of slight feelings by the force of a decidedly retentive imagination”. As to the *apprehension of danger*—it would belong to my disease if it could belong to me. But Sloth, carelessness, resignation in all things that have reference to mortal life is not merely *in* me, it is me. (Spite of grammar *i.e.* Lowth’s, for I affirm that in such instances “it is *me*” is genuine English and philosophical grammar). Mr. Edmundson whom I have consulted on the possibility or propriety of my tour into Scotland, recommends it. He is confident—O that I were—that by the use of carminative bitters I may get rid of this truly poisonous and body-and-soul-benumbing flatulence and inflation, and that if I can only get on, the exercise and the excitement will be of so much service as to outweigh the chances of injury from wet and cold. I will therefore go : though I never yet commenced a journey with such inauspicious heaviness of heart before. We, Wordsworth, Dorothy and myself, leave Keswick tomorrow morning. We have bought a stout horse, aged but stout and spirited, and an open vehicle called a jaunting car. There is room in it for three on each side, on hanging seats, a Dicky box for the driver, and a space or hollow in the middle for luggage, or two or three bairns. It is like half a long coach, only those in the one seat sit with their back to those in the other, instead of face to face. Your feet are not above a foot, scarcely so much—from the ground, so that you may get off and on while the horse is moving without the least danger. There are all sorts of conveniences in it—We came from Grasmere last Thursday in it : Wordsworth in the Dicky, Mrs. Wordsworth, our Mary, I, Hartley, Derwent, and Johnny Wordsworth, and this morning the

same party only instead of me, Mrs. Coleridge and Sara are gone to see Mrs. Wordsworth 7 miles of the way on to Grasmere. What a nice thing for us if you and Edith were to take the other half of this house, and my health gave any probability of my stay in England. But I swear by my Maker that I will not longer trifle. I will try this tour—if I cannot bear it I will return from Glasgow. I will try the new gout medicines and you would be doing me an essential service if you would call on Dr. Beddoes and say that I had long meditated a very long letter to him, which would have interested us both, in the shape of friendly remarks on his *Hygeia*—but I was hurried off from Gunville where the book was, and partly the not having the book to refer to, though I have the most *sting-like* recollections of its contents, and far far more the miserable state of my health, and the quantity I wished to say, has prevented me—and now I am ashamed to write on a mere selfish concern. I read his pamphlet on the new medicine with sincere *admiration*. With the single exception of the last page it seemed to me to have all the characteristic excellencies of his manner *classified* from his characteristic defects—that I have been made to understand that the new medicine is not to be procured without great difficulty from the empiric, nor without very heavy expence. However, whatever the expence be, I will give it one trial and should be greatly obliged to Dr. Beddoes if *he* would desire Mr. Wells to send down a sufficient quantity of the medicine, if he thinks it likely to be serviceable in a clear case of atonic gout.

.¹ I live very temperately—drinking only one tumbler of brandy and water in the 24 hours, but when I awake screaming I take tea or coffee with an egg and a good deal of cayenne pepper, which seems to procure me ease and sometimes sleep, though no doubt it injures me in the long run. But what can I do? I am sure that if Dr. Beddoes lived near me, or in the same house with me, he would soften down his opinions respecting the inefficiency of climate in gout cases. The effects of weather

¹ Minute details of the symptoms and effects of the “ atonic gout.”

are to the full as palpable upon me as upon the little old Lady and Gentleman in the weather box, or on the seaweed in the barber's shop. However, my dear Southey, do call on Dr. Beddoes and read such parts of this letter to him as you think fit—Say that I would have written to him *formally* as to a physician ; but that never having done so, if I should send a fee, it would seem as if I were willing to forget all his prior kindness to me, and all my obligations to him for the many letters of medical advice which he has heretofore sent me, as the richer man to the poorer. It is neither my theory nor my practice to do anything *from* gratitude ; but if I live and regain my powers of manifesting my powers I will act *with* gratitude : for indeed Dr. Beddoes has been very kind to me ; and I am often uncomfortable in my inner feelings at having permitted myself to be affected by little calumnious tittle-tattle respecting him, instead of daring to tell him with equal simplicity and honest zeal, wherein he is truly great and useful and wherein he manifestly injures his own powers of benefiting his fellow-creatures. What I want is to have a quantity of the gout medicine sent to Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland, by the waggon either from London or Bristol, so that on my return from Scotland I may find it here. Whatever the expence may be do you defray it for me, as I will remit you the money within a week of the receipt of your letter which shall inform me of the amount. If this fail, I then, *by God* ! go off to Malta or Madeira. Madeira is the better place ; but Stoddart is gone to Malta with a wife, with a place of £1500 a year, and has given me a very kind invitation. You had better write to me, The Post Office Edinburgh. I shall write to you from Glasgow. Mrs. C. is but middling. The children are quite well. Derwent and Sara are as beautiful as angels. I never saw a child so improved as Sara is and she is quietness itself, very lively and joyous, but all in a quiet way of her own—she feeds on her quietness—and “ has the most truly celestial expression of countenance I ever beheld in a human face ”. Now I have set you the example, and you may give loose to the father and write about dear little Margaret— Only let me say the

words "quoted" are Wordsworth's not mine, and Wordsworth's words always mean the whole of their *possible meaning*. She has blue eyes.

S. T. C.

LETTER 123

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter is badly mutilated, with whole sections blotted or cut out; I have indicated the deletions.]

Fort William,

Saturday, Sept. 3, 1803.

MY DEAR SARA

I learnt at the ferry that it would be safer to take my letter with me to this place, as the same post took it and did not go off till early on Sunday morning. I walked on very briskly, when now night came on. My road lay all the way by a great sea lake, rocks on woods, or rocks among woods, close by my right hand; great mountains across the sea on my left. And now I had walked twenty-eight miles in the course of the day when, being thirsty, I drank repeatedly in the palm of my hand, and thinking of writing to Sir G. Beaumont, I was saying to myself, 'this using one's hand instead of a cup has one disadvantage, that one literally does not know when one has had enough, and we leave off, not because the thirst is quenched, but because we are tired of stooping'. Soon after (in less than a furlong) a pain and intense sense of fatigue fell upon me, especially within my thighs, and great torture in my bad toe. However, I dragged myself along, but when I reached the town I was forced to lean on the man that shewed me my Inn (to which I had been recommended by a Dr. Hay Drummond who met me at King's house and *created* an acquaintance in the most farcical manner imaginable.) Mrs. Monro, the landlady, had no room at all, and I could not stand. However, she sent a boy with me to another little inn, which I entered, and sitting—

. . . 'Twas an affair altogether of the body,

not of the mind. That I had, it was true, a torturing pain in all my limbs, but that this had nothing to do with my tears which were hysterical and proceeded from the stomach.

Just as I had said this, a kind old man came in to me, who had crossed the ferry with me, and being on horseback, had been here half an hour before me. I had had some chat with him in the boat, told him of the gout in my stomach, and that this tour was an experiment for exercise etc. "I never saw a man," says he, "walk so well or so briskly as this young gentleman did; and indeed he must have done so, for I rode as hard as I could and yet have not been in much more than half an hour or three quarters." I told him, with faltering voice, that I should have been in half an hour sooner, but that the last mile and a half I could scarcely drag my limbs along, and that the fatigue had come upon me all at once. "Whoo! *whoo!* *whoo!*" says the old man, "you drank water by the roadside then." I said yes. "And you have gout in the stomach; indeed but you are in *peril*." By this time they had gotten me a dish of tea; but before I could touch it, my bowels were seized violently, and then

.
Gallon of nasty water, and so went to bed. I had a basin of hot tea brought to me, slept very soon and more soundly than I have done since I have been in Scotland. I find myself a little stiffish this morning. Thirty miles was perhaps too much for one day; yet I am positive I should not have felt it but for that unfortunate drench of water! I might have gone on, but I wished to have a shirt and stockings washed—I have but one pair of stockings, and they were so clotted and full of holes that it was a misery to *sit* with them on. So I have sent them to the wash and sit with none. I had determined to buy a pair of shoes whatever befell me in the way of money distresses; but there are none in the town ready made so I shall be obliged to go as far as Inverness with these, perhaps to Perth; and I speak in the simplest earnest when I say that I expect I shall be forced to throw them away before I get to Inverness, and to walk barefoot. My bad great toe on my left foot is a sore annoyance to me.

I am bewildered about this money. This letter will not reach you, I fear, till Wednesday night. However you must at all events send me this money (I can and will make five pounds do), 'Mr. Coleridge, to be left at the Post Office Perth, N. Britain'.

I have been so particular in my account of that hysterical attack, because this is now the third seizure and the first from mere physical causes. The two former were the effect of agitated feelings. I am sure that neither Mr. Edmundson nor you have any adequate notion how seriously ill I am. If the complaint does not settle, and very soon, in my extremities, I do not see how it will be possible for me to avoid a paralytic or apoplectic stroke.

I have no heart to speak of the children! God have mercy on them, and raise them up friends when I am in the grave. Remember me affectionately to Mr. Jackson and to Mrs. Wilson. Remember me to Mr. Wilkinson and Mrs. W. that if I return in tolerable health I anticipate a high feast in looking over [his drawings]— him for flattering.

[No signature]

LETTER 124

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday Morning, 12 o'clock,
[Postmark September 12, 1803.]

MY DEAREST SARA

I am writing to you from Fort Augustus where the Governor and his wise Police-Constable seized me and my Letter. Since then I have written to nobody. On my return, if God grants! we will take the Map of Scotland and by help of my pocket Book I will travel my route over again from place to place. It has been an instructive tho' melancholy Tour. At Fort Augustus I got a pair of Shoes—the day before I had walked 36 miles, 20 the *worst* in conception and up a mountain—so that in point of effort it could not be less than 46 miles;

the shoes were all to pieces and three of my Toes were skinless and I have a very promising Hole in my Heel. Since the new shoes I have walked on briskly--from 30 to 35 miles a day -day after day--and three days I lived wholly on oat cake, barley bannock, butter, and the poorest of all poor skim-milk Cheeses and still I had horrors at night! I mention all this to shew you that I have strength somewhere--and at the same time how deeply this Disease must have rooted itself. I wrote you my last Letter overclouded by Despondency, say rather, in a total eclipse of all Hope and Joy and as all things propagate their Like you must not wonder that Misery is a Misery-maker. But do you try, and I will try, and peace may come at last and Love with it. I have not heard of Wordsworth nor he of me.¹ He will be wondering what can have become of me. I have only read the first Letter and that part of Southey's containing the 10*l*. note which relates to himself, for they have stunned me and I am afraid of hystericks, unless a fit of vomiting which I feel coming on should as I hope it will turn it off.-- I must write no more, it is now 10 o'clock, and I go off in the mail at 4 in the morning. It went against the grain to pay 18 shillings for what I could have made an easy Day's walk of; but for my eagerness to be with dear Southey I should certainly have walked from Edinburgh home. O Sara! dear Sara! *try* for all good things in the spirit of unsuspecting Love, for miseries gather upon us.

I shall take this letter with me to Edinburgh and leave a space to announce my safe arrival, if so it please God. Good night -my sweet Children -

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I am safe in Edinburgh -and now going to seek out news about the Wordsworths, and my Clothes. I do not expect to stay here above this day. Dear Southey's Letter² had

¹ A fortnight after leaving home, Coleridge separated from the Wordsworths "professing to be very unwell and unable to face the wet in an open carriage." (*Life*, 138-139.)

² Apparently Southey had written telling Coleridge of the death of little Margaret Southey, who died in August, 1803.

the precise effect of intoxication by an overdose of some narcotic Drug—weeping—vomiting wakefulness the whole night in a sort of stupid sensuality of Itching from my Head to my Toes, all night. I had drunken only one pint of weak porter the whole day. This morning I have felt the soberness of Grief—God bless you all

and S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 125

To DR. THOMAS BEDDOES.

[Original letter, Library of Owen D. Young. Printed, *Catalogue of the Collection . . . formed by A. Morrison*, 1883-1892, ii. 252. Coleridge in dating this letter wrote "February" where he obviously meant to write "September."]

Edinburgh.

Tuesday, [September] 13, 1803.

DEAR SIR

I have but even now, received your very obliging Letter, which comforted as well as amused me. I will give the medicine the fullest, and fairest Trial, yield the most implicit obedience to your Instructions, and add to both every possible attention to Diet and Exercise. My Disorder I believe to be atonic Gout: my sufferings are often sufficiently great by day, but by patience, effort of mind, and hard walking I can contrive to keep the Fiend at arm's length, as long as I am in possession of Reason and Will. But with Sleep my Horrors commence; and they are such, three nights out of four, as literally to *stun* the intervening Day, so that more often than otherwise I fall asleep, struggling to remain awake. Believe me, Sir! Dreams are no Shadows with me; but the real, substantial miseries of Life. If in consequence of your Medicine I should be at length delivered from these sore visitations, my greatest uneasiness will then [be] how best and most fully I can evince my gratitude: should I commence Preacher, raise a new Sect in your honor—and make in short, a greater clamour in your favor, as the Anti-podagra, "that was to come, and is already in the world," than even the Puritans did against the poor Pope, as the Antichrist—Ho! all ye, who intreatingly

come, and draw waters of Healing from the *Wells* of Salvation. This in my own opinion I might say without impiety, for if to clear men's body from Torture, Lassitude and Captivity, their understanding from mists and broodings, and their very hearts and souls from despair, if to enable them to go about their duty, steadily and quietly, to love God, and be chearful, if all this be not a work of Salvation, I would be informed, what is. Or I have thought of becoming theorizing Physician of demonstrations, (for that is the fashionable word) that all Diseases are to be arranged under Surg. as the genus generalissimized—that all our faulty Laws, Regulations, National Mismanagements, Rebellions, Invasions, Heresies, have originated in the false Trains of Ideas introduced by diseased Sensations from the Stomach into the Brain of our Senators, Priests, and Merchants of our great and little men and hence to deduce, that all Diseases being Gout and curing the Gout, your medicine must cure *all* Diseases—then, joining party with Thomas Taylor,¹ the Pagan (for whom I have already a sneaking affection on account of his devout Love of Greek) to re-introduce the Heathen Mythology, and to detect in your person another descent and metamorphosis of the God of the Sun, to erect a Temple to you, as Phoebus Sanatori; and if you have a Wife, to have her deified, by act of Parliament, under the name of the Nymph, Panacea. But probably it would not be agreeable to you to be taken up like the Delha Lama [Dalai lama], and to be imprisoned during life for a God. You would rather, I doubt not, find your deserved reward in an ample independent future, and your sublunary Immortalization in the praises and thanks of good and sensible men: of all who have suffered *in* themselves or *for* others. And in sober earnest my dear Sir! (dropping All Joke, to which your lively and enlivening Letter has led me) to this last reward I shall be most happy to become instrumental, by being first a proof and such after an Evidence and Zealous Witnessser; of the powers and virtues of your discovery.

¹ Thomas Taylor (1758-1835) the Platonist, and author of numerous translations and classical studies.

I leave Wordsworth tomorrow morning, having walked 263 miles in eight days—the hope of forcing the Disease into the extremities : and if the Coachman does not put an end to all my earthly Ills by breaking my neck, I shall be at Greta Hall, Keswick, Thursday Afternoon—at which place I shall wait, with respectful Impatience for a Letter and Parcel from you. In the mean time dear Sir ! accept the best thanks and warmest wishes

of your obliged and grateful

humble Servant

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Great and well-founded however as your objection may be to my proposed national Apotheosis of your Person, yet as whatever, Verse or Prose, I write hereafter, would be chiefly owing to the cure by you performed, at all events “*eris mihi magnus Apollo*”.

LETTER 126

To TOM WEDGWOOD, 12 Paper Buildings, Temple, London.

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. Vaughan Williams, Published with omissions, *Reminiscences*, 465-467 ; and *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. B. Litchfield, 1903, 146-148.]

Greta Hall, Keswick,
September 16, Friday [1803.]

MY DEAR WEDGEWOOD

I reached home on yesterday noon, and it was not a Post Day. William Hazlitt¹ is a thinking, observant, original man, of great power as a Painter of Character Portraits, and far more in the manner of the old Painters, than any living Artist, but the objects must be *before* him ; he has no imaginative memory. So much for his Intellectuals. His manners are to 99 in 100 singularly repulsive—: brow-hanging, shoe-contemplative, *strange*. Sharp seemed to like him ; but Sharp saw him only for half an hour, and that walking—he is, I verily believe, kindly-

¹ In the light of Hazlitt's after treatment of Coleridge, this passage is of particular interest. Coleridge's analysis of Hazlitt shows great powers of insight.

natured - is very fond of, attentive to, and patient with, children ; but he is jealous, gloomy, and of an irritable Pride - and addicted to women, as objects of sexual Indulgence. With all this, there is much good in him - he is disinterested, an enthusiastic lover of the great men, who have been before us - he says things that are his own in a way of his own - and tho' from habitual Shyness and the outside and bearskin at least of misanthropy, he is strangely confused and dark in his conversation and delivers himself of almost all his conceptions with a Forceps, yet he says more than any man, I ever knew, yourself only excepted, that is his own in a way of his own - and oftentimes when he has warmed his mind, and the synovial juice has come out and spread over his joints, he will gallop for half an hour together with real Eloquence. He sends well-headed and well-feathered Thoughts straight forwards to the mark with a Twang of the Bow-string. If you could recommend him, as a Portrait-painter, I should be glad. To be your Companion he is, in my opinion, utterly unfit. His own Health is fitful. I have written, as I ought to do, to you most freely imo ex corde ; you know me, both head and heart, and will make what deductions, your reason will dictate to you. I can think of no other person. What wonder ? For the last years I have been shy of all mere acquaintances -

“ To live belov'd is all, I need,
And when I love, I love indeed.”¹

I never had any ambition ; and now, I trust, I have almost as little Vanity.

For 5 months past my mind has been strangely shut up. I have taken the paper with the intention to write to you many times ; but it has been all one blank Feeling, one blank idealess Feeling. I had nothing to say, I could say nothing. How dearly I love you, my very Dreams make known to me. I will not trouble you with the gloomy Tale of my Health. While I am awake, by patience, employment, effort of mind, and walking I can keep the fiend at Arm's length ; but the

¹ These lines form the conclusion to *The Pains of Sleep, Poems*, 389-391.

Night is my Hell, Sleep my tormenting Angel. Three nights out of four I fall asleep, struggling to lie awake and my frequent Night-screams have almost made me a nuisance in my own House. Dreams with me are no Shadows, but the very Substances and foot-thick Calamities of my Life. Beddoes, who has been to me ever a very kind man, suspects that my stomach "brews vinegar". It may be so—but I have no other symptom but that of Flatulence, shewing itself by an asthmatic Puffing, and transcient paralytic affections; this Flatulence has never any acid Taste in my mouth; I have no bowel-rumblings. I am too careful of my Diet—the supercarbonated Kals does me no service, nor magnesia—neither have I any head-ach. But I am grown hysterical. Meantime my looks and strength have improved. I myself fully believe it to be either atonic, hypochondriacal Gout, or a scrophulous affection of the mesenteric Glands. In the hope of drawing the Gout, if Gout it should be, into my feet, I walked, previously to my getting into the Coach at Perth, 263 miles in eight Days, with no unpleasant fatigue: and if I could do you any service by coming to town, and there were no Coaches, I would undertake to be with you, on foot, in 7 days. I must have strength somewhere; my head is indefatigably strong; my limbs too are strong; but acid or not acid, Gout or Scrofula, something there is [in] my stomach or Guts that transubstantiates my Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of the Devil—Meat and Drink I should say—for I eat but little bread, and take nothing, in any form, spiritual or narcotic, stronger than Table Beer. I am about to try the new Gout medicine, and if it cures me, I will turn Preacher, form a new Sect in honor of the Discoveries, and make a greater clamour *in his Favor*, as the Anti-podagra, "that was to come and is already in the world", than ever the Puritan did *against* the poor Pope, as Antichrist.

All my family are well. Southey, his wife and Mrs. Lovell are with us. He has lost his little girl, the unexpected Gift of a long marriage, and stricken to the Heart is come hither for such poor comforts as my society can afford him.

To diversify this dusky letter I will write as a Post-script an Epitaph, which I composed in my sleep for myself, while dreaming that I was dying. To the best of my recollection I have not altered a word. Your's dear Wedgewood, and of all, that are dear to you at Gunville, gratefully and most affectionately,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Epitaph.

Here sleeps at length poor Col. and without Screaming,
Who died, as he had always liv'd, a dreaming :
Shot dead, while sleeping, by the Gout within,
Alone, and all unknown, at E'nbro' in an Inn." ¹

It was on 'Tuesday Night last at the Black Bull, Edinburgh

LETTER 127

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Greta Hall, Keswick.

Sunday Evening, Oct. 2, 1803.

MY DEAR BROTHER

I have this moment received yours of Sept. 28th. It is, indeed, very long since I have written to you—the sole reason has been that I had nothing to communicate that was not of a depressing nature ; and I am sick to the very soul of speaking or writing concerning my bodily miseries. My Disorder is supposed to be atonic gout : in addition to which my medical friends suspect a scrophulous affection of the mesenteric gland. While I am awake and retain possession of my will and reason I can contrive to keep the Fiend at arm's length. [With] sleep [are] thrown wide open all the gates of the beleaguered city and such a host of Horrors rush in that three nights out of four, I fall asleep struggling to lie awake, and start up and bless my own loud screams that have awakened me. In the hope that change of scene might relieve me and that hard exercise might throw the disease into the extremities, I left my home on August 15th, and made the

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 970.

tour of Scotland : and I am certainly better since my return, tho' I have a troublesome intermittent fever, that recurs with very severe Hemicrania about 5 o'clock every afternoon and which has hitherto baffled the use of bark. Meantime I am neither weaker nor emaciated. The last 8 days of my walk, I walked about 263 miles, about 34 miles a day on an average. Since my return I have been trying [a] celebrated new gout medicine, and have had less affrightful nights, and some symptoms of the disease ripening in the feet. No bridegroom ever longed for rapture with more impatience than I for torture. So much of myself, which I have written not without reluctance—Just before my arrival at Perth, my heart had been visited with many tender yearnings towards you and, indeed, all my kin. I resolved if my health should be endurable, and if I could arrange my money matters, so as to make such a journey right and convenient, to leave this place in the latter end of October with my family, and having passed a week or so with Sir G. Beaumont at Dunmow to push forward for Ottery, and there to stay till spring. But at Perth I found letters from Southey—his little girl, an unexpected gift after a 7 years' marriage, died of water on the brain from teething, and Southey and his wife almost heart-broken, immediately left Bristol, and came to Keswick—Southey for the comforts he expected from my society, and Mrs. Southey to be with her sister. Still it is not improbable that I may spend my Christmas among you, only I shall come alone. These, my Brother are awful times, but I really see no reason for any feelings of Dispondency. If it be God's will that the commercial Gourd should be canker-filled—if our horrible iniquities in the W. Indian Islands and on the coasts of Guinea call for judgment on us—God's will be done ! Yet Providence seldom destroys a nation without first degrading it. The Romans were effeminate, cowardly, basely oblivious of all public virtues, and below all comparison inferior to their barbarian overwhelters in domestic virtues, when Rome fell before the Huns— Now bad as we may be ; we assuredly are the best among nations—in strength and *individual* valour superior to our enemies,

and not so much their inferiors in military skill as to counter-balance our vast advantage in point of numbers. The times are awful. I keep my spirit still in a kind of devotional calm, and I trust would meet "the sweet and graceful death pro patriâ" with as high an enthusiasm as ever Spartan did.¹ But I seriously think that this invasion if attempted in vehement good earnest by the Corsican Tippoo Saib, will be a blessing to this country and to Europe. Let us be humble before our Maker, but not spirit-palsied before our blood-thirsty enemies. We will tremble at the possible punishment which our national crimes may have made us worthy of, from retributive Providence: we will tremble at what God may do; but not at what our enemies can do of themselves. When were we a more united People? when so well prepared? The very nature of the invasion will cut off from the French Army most of the opportunities of Military tactics, and bring the affair man to man, bayonet against bayonet. That this day was coming I foresaw at the conclusion of the Peace, and have not ceased in various ways and in various publications to warn and alarm the country: and it is a comfort to me, far beyond all the little vanities of authorship, that my Essays and alarum trumpets in the *Morning Post*, had an immediate and very exclusive effect. Heaven knows! what a sacrifice I made in thus forcing myself away from the abstruse researches in which I am engaged and to embark on this strong sea of Politics; but I felt it my duty, the more especially as my former essays during the Peace were those that had so extravagantly irritated the First Consul. In March, 1800, I published in the *Morning Post*, a long and very severe "character of Mr. Pitt", promising at the same time a Character of Bonaparte.²

¹ "Napoleon gathered great forces along the coasts opposite England, from Holland to Brittany, upon the chance, or (by some miracle) a temporary weakening of the overwhelming English naval power, might conceivably permit a descent upon the English coast . . . but the chances of its happening at all . . . were indeed remote." *History of England*, Lingard and Belloc, 1915, 397.

² The character of Bonaparte was never published, if written. The character of Pitt appeared in the *Morning Post*, March 19, 1800.

Since the time of Junius no single essay ever made more noise in a newspaper than this, and day after day my character of Bonaparte was promised. I did not do it for reasons which appeared very forcible to me. In somewhat more than a month after the appearance of "Pitt", "Otto" sent privately to Stuart to enquire when the character of Bonaparte would appear. Stuart returned some evasive answers, and Otto then sent a confidential friend to Stuart to beg a particular answer, and this friend communicated to Stuart, that the question was asked at the instance of Bonaparte himself, who had been extremely impressed with the Character of Pitt, and very anxious to see his own, which, no doubt, he expected would be a pure eulogy. Stuart immediately came to me and was in very high spirits on the occasion. I turned and answered him "Stuart, that man will prove a tyrant and the deadliest enemy of the liberty of the Press". "Indeed!" "Yes, a man, the Dictator of a vast Empire to be so childishly solicitous for the *panegyric* of a newspaper scribbler, will be not equally irritable at the abuse of newspaper scribblers! I am sick and sad to feel how important little men become when madmen are in favor"—Stuart has often talked of publishing this conversation of mine, as an instance of political prophecy. This will remind you of the memoirs of P. B. Clerk of this parish! Alas! that was no Burlesque in the present day and poor Dennis' request to the Duke of Marlborough would now have nothing ridiculous in it. The mad vanity and low detail of the First Consul is almost irresistible. I will finish in my Wife's Letter.

Continuation of my letter

Enough of Politics—at least in *words*! I should have wholly abstained from a subject that is truly wearisome to my spirit, if your letter, dear Friend of my Childhood, had not appeared to me to breathe despondency beyond the occasion. I am sincerely and not slightly grieved that I have been silent so long. It is but a wretched excuse to say, that all my friends have the same complaint to make: and in very truth my heart has been strangely shut up within itself—

“ For not to *think* of what I needs must feel,
 But to be still and patient all I can—
 And haply by abstruse Research to steal
 From my own Nature all the natural man—
 This was my sole resource my wisest plan !
 And that which suits a Part infects the Whole,
 And now is almost grown the Habit of my Soul !¹

I have sometimes derived a comfort from the notion, that possibly these horrid Dreams with all their mockery of Crimes and Remorse and Shame and terror might have been sent upon me to arouse me out of that proud and stoical apathy, into which I had fallen—it was resignation, for I was not an atheist ; but it was resignation without religion, because it was without struggle, without difficulty, because it originated in the Understanding, and a stealing . . . contempt, not in the affections. But amid all my . . .²

I have been a serene, perhaps too serene a student—I have [written] much and prepared materials for more—and yet I trust [that I do not] deceive myself when I say that I could leave all . . .² without a pang. I have not read on an average less than 8 hours a day for the last three years—but all is vanity. I feel it more and more ; all is vanity that does not lead to quietness and unity of heart, and to the silent awful idealess watching of that living spirit, and of that Life within us, which is the motion of that spirit—that Life which passeth all understanding. Before I finish, let me say that there is yet one other cause of my silence. Your last letter on Faith and Reason had affected me very deeply. I was sure that we agreed in the depth and bottom of our meanings, and yet I thought that you had expressed yourself inaccurately, and began to reflect and make notes on the fine boundaries of Faith and Reason—till I found that I should have written a treatise instead of a letter. However, it is my firm intention, that in future no such unbrotherly silence shall take place, on my part. You I have always loved and honored as more than mere brother : and it was not my fault, that the mere names of brother and kindred were of necessity less powerful than

¹ *Ode to Dejection*, lines 87-93, *Poems*, 367. ² MS. mutilated.

in those of other men—who with perhaps vastly less sensibility have had the good fortune to have been more domestically reared. But what I am is in consequence of what I have been : and there is enough in that which I am, to be honourable and useful to my fellow men if the great Giver of all things give me the grace and the perseverance to call it forth wisely, and to apply it prudently. I shall hope to hear soon again from you—in the meantime present my best duty to our venerable mother—My kindest love to your wife, and fatherly wishes for your children—to the Colonel and all of his Family and to Edward and those of his household a brother's Love—and the same to Mrs. Luke— My Derwent appears to me very like what William was when of the same age—

With affectionate esteem and grateful and remembering love I am, my dearest Brother, ever yours

S. T. C.

LETTER 128

To THOMAS POOLE, Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.

[Original letter, British Museum.]

*Keswick,
October 3, 1803.*

MY DEAR FRIEND

Tho' I should write but half a dozen Lines, I will write ; for my long Silence affects almost a sense of Guilt. Continual Ill-health, and Discomforts almost worse than that, have shut me up strangely—I have written to no one—God forbid that my worst Enemy should ever have the Nights of the Sleep that I have had, night after night—surprized by Sleep, while I struggled to remain awake, starting up to bless my own loud Screams, that had awakened me—yea, dear friend ! till my repeated Night-yells had made me a Nuisance in my own House. As I live and am a man, this is an unexaggerated tale—my Dreams become the Substances of my Life—

A lurid Light, a ghastly Throng—
Sense of insufferable wrong.

And whom I scorn'd, they only strong !—
 Thirst of Revenge, the powerless will
 Still baffled, and yet burning still—
 Tempestuous pride, vain-glorious Vaunting,
 Base men my vices justly taunting—
 Desire with Loathing strangely mixt
 Or with a hateful object fix't—
 Fantastic Passions, mad'ning Brawl,
 And Shame and Terror over all !—
 Deeds to be hid, that were not hid,
 Which, all confus'd I might not know,
 Whether I suffer'd as I did :
 For all was Guilt, and Shame, and Woe—
 My own or others', still the same,
 Life-stifling Fear, Soul-stifling Shame !¹

All symptoms conspired to prove that I had *Gout*, atonic stomach Gout, for one Disease—and my medical attendant suspected mesenteric Scrofula, in addition. I went into Scotland with Wordsworth and his Sister ; but I soon found that I was a burthen on them, and Wordsworth, himself a brooder over his painful hypochondriacal sensations, was not my fittest companion, so I left him and the Jaunting Car, and walked by myself far away into the Highlands—in the hopes of forcing the Disease to my extremities—at what a rate, you may guess, when I tell you, that the last eight Days I have walked 263 miles. At Perth I received two Letters from Southey, the first informing me of the certain Death of his Infant Child, and the deplorable heart-stricken state in which he and his wife were—and of their wish to be at Keswick, he expecting comfort from me, Edith from her Sister. The second informed me of their arrival at Keswick—I accordingly took a place in the Mail and hastened home—Soon after I received a large [dose] of the new Gout medicine, and assuredly, it has been of manifest service to me—and I write with my left hand swoln, and with strong symptoms of a fair full fit of the Gout in my Feet. No Bridegroom ever longed for Rapture more impatiently than I for Torture—It is wonderful, how this has relieved me ! how balsam-

¹ Cf. *Poems*, 389 (*The Pains of Sleep*) for another version of these lines.

sweet and profound my Sleep has been—how freely I breathe—how freely my Spirits seem to move within me! So much of myself.¹ Southey seems very happy in my society—and tho' overpowered at moments, acts like a man.

How are you employed? What part have you taken in this Alarm? As to me, I think, the Invasion must be a Blessing. For if we do not repel it, and cut them to pieces, we are a Vile sunken race, and it is good, that our Betters should *crack* us—And if we do act as Men, Christians, Englishmen—down goes the Corsican Miscreant, and Europe may have peace. At all events, dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori—and I trust, I shall be found rather seeking than shunning it, if the French Army should maintain it's footing, even for a fortnight. Let me hear from you. It is not possible that you can feel any resentment now you know how calamitously I have been environed. Tell me all about yourself—what you are doing, what meditating—whether you can infuse any simple plain sense into the cerebellum of that foolish, well-meaning Driveller, the Minister. Southey tells me, that Rickman meant to apply to you—Love to Ward—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 129

To THOMAS POOLE, *N. Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum.]

*Greta Hall, Keswick,
Friday, October 14, 1803.*

MY DEAREST POOLE

I received your letter this evening, thank you for your kindness in answering it immediately, and will prove my thankfulness by doing the same. In answer to your question respecting Leslie and T. Wedgewood, I say—to the best of

¹ Sympathy with Coleridge, after so many vivid descriptions of his health, becomes almost impossible. Poole, healthy and vigorous, could not understand, and wrote: "Be sure you leave strict orders if you die, to Mrs. Coleridge, or some one, to write to me immediately, that I may be certain while I do not hear from you that you have not been dead long." (*Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 117).

my Knowledge, *Not a word, at any time*. I have examined and cross-examined my recollective Faculty with no common earnestness ; and I cannot produce in myself even the dimmest *Feeling* of any such conversation. Yet I talk so much and so variously, that doubtless I say a thousand Things that exist in the minds of others, when to my own consciousness they are as if they had never been. I lay too many Eggs in the hot Sands with Ostrich Carelessness and ostrich oblivion.¹ And tho' many are luckily trod on and mashed yet many crawl forth into Life some to furnish Feathers for the Caps of others, and more alas ! to plume the Shafts in the Quivers of my Enemies and of them " that lie in wait against my Soul ". But in the present instance, if I had mentioned anything of the Kind, T. Wedgewood has so great a Love for you, as well as respect and affectionate Regard for Leslie, that he would have both suffered and expressed great Pain ; I should have instantly felt that I had done wrong—and events of this sort I *never forget*. Likewise, I admire Leslie, and cherish high Hopes of him ; and thought at the time, that part of your Dislike had been ill-founded, and that you had disliked him for a cause which had made you more than once treat me very harshly—namely, a supposed disposition in me to detract from the merits of two or three, whom you from childhood had been taught to contemplate with religious awe ; but whom I thought very second rate men, not sufficiently considering, that for one man [before] whom Leslie or myself might *Cower* in the Symposium of Genius, there are 10 faces unknown at present to you, whom we should place at the head of the Table and in the places of Honor—in other words, that there is perhaps a larger mass (and a more frequent calling of it into activity) of awe and love of the great departed in my mind than in your's. This was in my Heart—for I suffered a great deal from your expressions between Blandford and Gunville—and would of itself, have restrained me from making your Dislike a subject of Conversation ; and as *to the other* cause of your Dislike, it is so very serious a Thing, that I should have

¹ This figure of speech was a great favourite of Coleridge's.

thought myself downright a Rogue if I had mentioned it. I think therefore, that without the least rashness I may *assert* at once, that I never did speak to T. W. on the subject. If any thing of this nature have come to his ears from me, it must have been thro' some third or fourth Person—Tobin, for instance, who is an exceeding mischief-maker, his Blindness, poor Fellow ! making this sort of Gossip a high Treat to him ; but I do not recollect having mentioned it to him—or to any one but, I believe, to Wordsworth—and I hope therefore, that it will not have originated in me at all. It would be very, very painful to me. But I cannot be as confident of this, as of the former. Time I finished the Letter, I seem to have some *dim*, very *dim*, Feeling of having mentioned it once to *Davy*. I seem to feel, as if I had not mentioned it to Wordsworth—but that it *was Davy*. But this is very likely to be all the mere straining of the memory—Colours in the eyes from staring in the Dusk and rubbing them. Whoever mentioned it to T. W. acted a very unwise part to use the mildest phrase. If I had mentioned your Dislike of Leslie to T. W., it would have been assuredly mentioned as common to myself and to Leslie—and as arising from the same cause—tho' the Dislike in my instance was only for the moment, a bubble broken by the agitation that gave it Birth. O deeply, deeply do I detest this rage for Personality : and it is among the clamour of my Conscience, that I have so long delayed the Essay, which for so many years I have planned and promised ! Wordsworth is in good health, and all his family. He has one *large* Boy, christened John. He has made a Beginning to his Recluse. He was here on Sunday last : his Wife's Sister, who is on a visit at Grasmere, was in a bad hysterical way, and he rode in to consult our excellent medical men. I now see very little of Wordsworth : my own Health makes it inconvenient and unfit for me to go thither one third as often, as I used to do—and Wordsworth's Indolence, etc., keeps him at home. Indeed, were I an irritable man, and an unthinking one, I should probably have considered myself as having been very unkindly used by him in this respect—for I was at one time

confined for two months, and he never came in to see me—me, who had ever payed such unremitting attentions to him. But we must take the good and the ill together ; and by seriously and habitually reflecting on our own faults and endeavoring to amend them we shall then find little difficulty in confining our attention as to acts on our Friends' characters, to their good qualities. Indeed, I owe it to Truth and Justice, as well as to myself to say, that the concern, which I have felt in this instance, and one or two other more *crying* instances, of Self-involution in Wordsworth, has been almost wholly a Feeling of friendly Regret, and disinterested Apprehension—I saw him more and more benetted in hypochondriacal Fancies, living wholly among *Devotees*—having every the minutest Thing, almost his very Eating and Drinking done for him by his Sister, or Wife—and I trembled, lest a Film should rise, and thicken on his moral Eye. The habit too of writing such a multitude of small Poems was in this instance hurtful to him—such Things as that Sonnet of his in Monday's Morning Post, about Simonides and the Ghost— I rejoice therefore with a deep and true Joy, that he has at length yielded to my urgent and repeated—almost unremitting—requests and remonstrances—and will go on with the Recluse exclusively. A great Work, in which he will sail on ; an open Ocean, and a steady wind ; unfretted by short tucks, reefing, and hawling and, disentangling the ropes—great work necessarily comprehending his attention and Feelings within the circle of great objects and elevated Conceptions—this is his natural Element. The having been out of it has been his Disease—to return into it is the specific Remedy, both Remedy and Health. It is what Food is to Famine. I have seen enough, positively to give me feelings of hostility towards the plan of several of the Poems in the *L. Ballads* : and I really consider it as a misfortune, that Wordsworth ever deserted his former Mountain Track to wander in Lower vallies ; tho' in the event it may prove to have been a great Benefit to him. He will steer, I trust, the middle course. But he found himself to be, or rather to be called, the Head and founder of a *Sect* in Poetry : and assuredly he

has written and published in the Morning Post, as W.L.D. and sometimes with no signature—poems written with a *sectarian* spirit, and in a sort of Bravado. I know, my dear Poole, that you are in the habit of keeping my Letters ; but I must request of you, and do *rely* on it, that you will be so good as to destroy this Letter—and likewise, if it be not already done, that Letter which in the ebullieny of indistinct Conceptions I wrote you respecting Sir Isaac Newton's optics—and which to my *Horror* and Shame I saw that Ward had transcribed—a letter which, if I were to die and it should ever see the Light would damn me forever, as a man mad with Presumption.¹

Hartley is what he always was—a strange strange Boy—“*exquisitely wild*” ! An utter Visionary ! like the Moon among thin Clouds, he moves in a circle of Light of his own making—he alone, in a Light of his own. Of all human Beings I never yet saw one so utterly naked of *Self*—he has no Vanity, no Pride, no Resentment, and tho’ *very passionate*, I never yet saw him *angry with any body*. He is, tho’ . . .² 7 years old, the merest child, you can conceive—and yet Southey says, that the Boy keeps him in perpetual Wonderment—his Thoughts are so truly his own. He [is not] generally speaking an *affectionate* child, but his Dispositions are very sweet. A great Lover of Truth, and of the finest moral nicety of Feeling—apprehension to over [sic] yet always Dreaming. He said very prettily about half a year ago—on my reproving him for some inattention, and asking him if he did not see some thing ; “ My Father ! ” quoth he with flute-like Voice—“ I see it—I saw it—I see it now—and tomorrow I shall see it when I shut my eyes, and when my eyes are open and I am looking at other Things ; but Father ! it’s a sad pity—but it can’t be helped ; you know—but I am always being a bad Boy, because I am always *thinking of my thoughts* ”. He is troubled with Worms—and to-night has had a clyster of oil and Lime water, which never fails to set him to rights for a month or two— If God preserve his Life for me, it will be interesting to know what he

¹ For this letter, see *Letters*, i. 350-354.

² Word illegible in MS.

will be—for it is not my opinion, or the opinion of two or three—but all who have been with him, talk of him as of a thing that cannot be forgotten.¹ Derwent, and my meek little Sara, the former is just recovering of a very bad epidemic Intermittent Fever, with tearing cough—and the other sweet Baby is even now suffering under it— He is a fat large lovely Boy—in all things but his Voice very unlike Hartley—very vain, and much more fond and affectionate—never of his Feelings so profound—in short, he is just what a sensible Father ought to wish for—a fine, healthy, strong, beautiful child, with all his senses and faculties as they ought to be—with no chance, as to his person, of being more than a good-looking man, and as to his mind, no prospect of being more or less than a man of good sense and tolerably *quick parts*.² Sara is a remarkably interesting Baby, with the finest possible skin and large blue eyes—and she smiles, as if she were basking in a sunshine, as mild as moonlight, of her own quiet Happiness.³ She has had the cow-pox. Mrs. Coleridge enjoys her old state of excellent Health. We go on, as usual—except that tho' I do not love her a bit better, much I quarrel with her less. We cannot be said to live at all as Husband and Wife, but we are peaceable Housemates. Mrs. Lovell and Mrs. Southey have miserable Health, but

¹ Hartley Coleridge was indeed a remarkable child. With rare insight Coleridge often speaks of him with foreboding presentiment; and Hartley's unfortunate after-life shows that his father had foreseen only too well what the future might be. Nor was Coleridge alone in his fears. Southey in the same month (October, 1803) wrote that "the springs are of too exquisite workmanship to last long" (*Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*, J. W. Warter, 1856, i. 242); and Wordsworth a year earlier composed his poem, *To H. C., Six Years Old*, with the lines

"Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years."

For an account of Hartley Coleridge's childhood, see *Hartley Coleridge: His Life and Work*, E. L. Griggs, 1929.

² Derwent Coleridge's after-life (for he achieved distinction as a churchman and schoolmaster, and as an editor), shows how well Coleridge understood "his fat child," then only three years old.

³ Sara Coleridge, the baby "mild as moonlight," became the author not only of *Phantasmion* and verses for children, but a translator of the Latin of Martin Dobrizhoffer. In spite of her thorough-going Protestantism, she understood better than most her father's theological flights.

Mrs. Southey I hope is pregnant—and Mrs. Lovell never can be well, while there exist in the world such things as Tea, and Lavender and Hawthorn Shops, and the absence of religion, and the presence of depression, and Passions. Southey I like more and more—he is a good man, and his Industry stupendous ! Take him all in all, sense, regularity, domestic virtues, Genius, Talents, Acquirements, and Knowledge—and he stands by himself. But Mrs. Southey and Mrs. Lovell are a large, a very large Bolus !—but it is astonishing, how one's Swallow is allayed by the sense of doing one's Duty—at least where the Pill is to pass off sometime or other—and the medicine to be discontinued. But scarcely can ever the sense of Duty reconcile one to taking Jalap regularly instead of Breakfast. . . . My own Health is certainly improved by this new gout medicine. I cannot however get delivered in a full natural way of this child of Darkness and Discomfort—always threatening and bullying—but the swelling never inflames sufficiently and all is commonly carried off in a violent *Sweat*—a long sudden soaking sweat. But God be praised ! My Nights since I last wrote have been astonishingly improved and I am confident now that my complaint is nothing but a flying Gout with a little Gravel—This Letter is meant to be about myself—O that I could but be in London with you. It seems to me that you are entering—on the Porch of a Temple, for which Nature has made and destined you to be the Priest. But more of this hereafter—

I have been, to use a mild word, agitated by two *infamous* . . .¹ Paragraphs in the Morning Post of Thursday and Friday last. I believe them to be Mackintosh's—O that they were. I would . . .¹ him into . . .¹ I am now exerting myself to the utmost on this Subject. Do write me *instantly* what you think of them ; or rather, what you thought, what you felt, what you saw !—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ MS. illegible.

LETTER 130

To MRS. THELWALL, Kendal.

[Original letter, Pierpont Morgan Library.]

Greta Hall, Keswick.

Tuesday Night, [November, 1803.]

DEAR MRS. THELWALL

I did not receive your Husband's Letter etc. till the day before yesterday, when Mr. Clarkson delivered it to me. I was vexed at the delay—as Thelwall would naturally think my silence a proof of neglect and forgetfulness of past kindness. To all other purposes the Delay did no harm for I have been so *very, very* ill, with such a complication of bodily miseries, for the last 3 weeks that I could not possibly have come over to Kendal. As Thelwall is a Land-nautilus and drives on in his own Shell, there can be no reason why he should not go from Kendal to Ambleside, to Grasmere (where he will see Wordsworth) and thence to Keswick—from Keswick to Carlisle by Newmarket Heskett, which is 25 miles—The whole journey from Kendal to Carlisle through Keswick is 55 miles—but 12 miles or so round about, as I guess. The road from Keswick to Carlisle I myself travelled this year in an Irish Car. If your Husband adopt this plan, and immediately on his arrival at Kendal will give me a few Lines, stating the day, on which he intends to leave it, etc., I will—if my miserable carcass be in any tolerable state of subservience to my wishes—walk to Kendal and so return with him, in order to see you and your family—and to have the more of his Conversation.

Believe me, I have never ceased to think with tenderness—and have often thought with an *anxious* tenderness—of him and his—and sincerely do I rejoice in his Well-doing and Well-being—sincerely rejoice that (to use the Words of Milton a little altered) he has disembarked from a troubled Sea of Noises and hoarse disputes, to behold the bright Countenance of Truth in the quiet and still Air of delightful Disquisition. I could not guess at his System from his Syllabus, and my curiosity therefore has still it's first *edge*

on it. I dread at Edinburgh the effects of the inordinate Self-sufficiency and Disputatiousness that deforms the character of the literary part of it's Inhabitants, if report is not a Liar. Unanswerable Truth is a Torment to a mind, that has formed it's whole taste and habit of pleasure in *answering*—to men, who have dubbed the monosyllable "*But*", gentleman-usher to all their Sentences. I have seen hitherto little Truth struck out by the so much boast[ed] *Collision* of Sentiment in *Conversation*.

I have 3 children, 2 boys and a girl—and they and my Wife are well. I sincerely wish, we were near Kendal—or rather that Kendal were very near to this Heaven upon Earth that the two families might be comforts to each other. I shall be too late for the Post, if I write more, and my Health is so precarious, that what I do not write this Hour I may be unable to write the next—

With my kindest Remembrances to your Husband and yourself, and ardent Well-wishing for you,

I remain,

dear Mrs. Thelwall,

With simple and sincere Esteem and Affection

Your faithful Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 131

To JOHN THELWALL, *Kendal*.

[Original letter, Pierpont Morgan Library.]

Friday Night, November 26, 1803.

MY DEAR THELWALL

I received your Wife's kind and very interesting Letter; but was too ill to answer it by return of Post. I cannot without the most culpable Imprudence attempt to reach Kendal; especially as I could not possibly arrive there time enough to spend any time at all with your Family—but I will go to Grasmere, and will meet you there, if you come that way—as by Mrs. Thelwall's Letter I promise myself, that you will. I shall very soon—certainly

in a week or ten days—leave this country, to seek a vessel either for Malta or Madeira—for I dare stay no longer in this climate. But I will assuredly see Mrs. Thelwall—and her friend—whose attachment to one unknown or at least unseen, affected and pleased me—not for myself—Heaven knows ! she might easily have found a less unworthy object of her favorable opinion—but because such feelings of Esteem and Affection for persons, who are known to us only in spirit, are the exclusive property of minds at once fervent and pure and formative ; minds untamed by “ the dreary Intercourse ” of common Life, and inspired by their own natures to believe, and have a Joy in the goodness of others.

My health is in a most distressful state ; my Bowel and Stomach attacks frequent and alarming. But I bear Pain with a woman’s Fortitude ; it is constitutional with me to look quietly and steadily in it’s face, as it were, and to ask it—What and Whence it is ?

If this Letter reach you in time, you will oblige me by going to the best Druggist in Kendal for me, and purchasing an ounce of crude opium, and 9 ounces of Laudanum, the latter put in a stout bottle and so packed up as that it may travel a few hundred miles with safety. The whole will cost, I believe, half a guinea and you will bring them with you in your gig. Robert Southey is with me at present. He is a good man, a faithful Lover of all that good men once hoped for and must ever desire, and he has a great respect and kindness for you—Wordsworth is likewise here—he came in last night to see me, I being very ill—but Today I am a good deal better, and hope to derive from you a stimulus strong enough to make your all too short sojourn with us pleasant to you and representative of old Times. With best good wishes for you and your’s

I am as ever, dear Thelwall,

Your’s

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Do you know G. Braithwaite, junr.—a Quaker of our friend Clarkson's Acquaintance? If you do, I wish you would call on him, present my regards, and in my name request him to procure for me Scotus in Sententias from the Sandys' Library, which you can bring with you. You will laugh heartily at travelling in a Gig with old Duns Scotus for your Companion— God bless the old Schoolmen! they have been my best comforts, and most instructive Companions for the last 2 years. Could you have believed, that I could have come to *this*?

LETTER 132

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

* [From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta*, E. L. Griggs, *Modern Philology*, vol. xxvii. No. 2 (Nov. 1929). - As an explanation of Coleridge's activities at this time, I quote from a letter to Tom Wedgwood: "I left my home December 20, 1803, intending to stay a day and a half at Grasmere, and then to walk to Kendal, whither I had sent all my Cloathes and Viatica; from thence to go to London—and to see whether or no I could arrange my pecuniary matters, so as leaving Mrs. Coleridge all that was necessary to her comforts, to go myself to Madeira. . . . Wordsworth had as I may truly say, *forced* on me a hundred Pound, in the event of my going to Madeira—and Stuart had kindly offered to befriend me. . . . I stayed at Grasmere a month, $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the time bed-ridden—and deeply do I feel the enthusiastic kindness of Wordsworth's Wife and Sister, who sate up by me, one or the other, in order to awaken me at the first symptoms of distressful Feeling—and even when they went to rest, continued often and often to weep and watch for me even in their dreams. I left them, Saturday, Jan. 14th—have spent a very pleasant week at Dr. Crompton's at Liverpool, and arrived at Poole's lodgings last night, at 8 o'clock." *Tom Wedgwood, the First Photographer*, R. B. Litchfield, 1903, 167-168. Coleridge later gave up the idea of going to Madeira for his health, and determined on Malta.]

No. 16, Abingdon, Westminster.

*Wednesday Morning, Jan. 24, 1804.*¹

MY DEAR SARA

My right hand is so swollen, that I cannot without pain and difficulty put the two fingers close enough to the thumb to keep the pen steady—My left hand is likewise swoln and eke my knees and ancles. I am more and more convinced that it is not gout—or at all events, that if my case be flying, windy gout, that flying windy gout is not the

¹ Jan. 24, 1804, was on Tuesday.

same disease with regular gout, but a something cutaneous—a something neither scrofulous nor scorbutic absolutely and yet partaking of both. In my stomach, Heaven be prais'd ! I am tolerably easy, and I draw my breath if not freely yet regularly. Let my mind remain in deep tranquillity and I hope all good things of my health and having health, I have a prideless steady confidence that I shall be active and persevering to the full length, width, and depth of the faculties and acquirements, which Providence has entrusted to my use and keeping. So much of my health and state of mind, the things of main interest to you, my dear Sara ! believe me, hourly thro' the day I am planning or praying for your comfort and peace : nor is it possible that any name can be more awfully affecting, or sink into my heart, and my heart's heart, with a greater weight of duty, than that of the virtuous mother of my children. We will try hard, my dearest Friend : that the severest Judge shall be able to detect no other evil in us, than the—misfortune, I trust rather than the evil—of being unsuited to each other.

I arrived at the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly, yesternight 7 o'clock and took myself and luggage in a Hackney Coach to 16 Abingdon St. Poole (who last week had waited for me till midnight at the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill) was at home—drest so *grand* ! and welcomed me with wonted cordiality—he had prepared for me a very comfortable bed at Waghorn's Coffee House, just at the head of the street, next door to the House of Lords—a quiet domestic place, kept by Betsy Segur's mother—Mrs. Segur (who has the affections of a mother to T. Poole with the reverence of one variously and deeply indebted to him, and who likewise had a boy at Christ's Hospital, now dead but to whom according to his own accounts I had been exceedingly kind when a Grecian) received me like a motherly, affectionate open hearted woman—With her Poole and I breakfast at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8—at 9 Poole goes to his Parliament Office, the *Worshipful* with his dozen clerks ! and leaves me this nice Parlour till 4 o'clock. I have so many letters to write this morning. . . .¹

¹ MS. mutilated.

God Almighty bless you in all things, my dear Sara ! write to me as gladsomely as you can—for O ! my children, my children ! they and other things make me *so* sensitive and sore ! one who shrinks from a touch as feeling that even a touch might pass into agony ! but I shall grow firmer and manlier. Tear off the latter scrap below and give it to Southey—say all kind things to every body as if I had written them. Again and again bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 133

To ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

16 *Abingdon St., Westminster.*

Wednesday, Feb. 1, 1804—A summer day.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

An author has been inflicting a tragedy upon me,¹ and I have been all the morning in durance and endurance—when I received (about 1 o'clock) a kind note from Rickman, in whose parcel this will go—went out under a promise of return in an hour—in the meantime the author locks up his MS. in my cupboard and takes the key, and there was the beginning of a letter which I was writing yesterday when G. Bedford² came and stayed out my ante-prandial time. I am tolerably well, only on Saturday in consequence of the bad weather and a letter of tremendous gloom from T. W., my stomach was diseased, and on swallowing half a dozen morsels of my dinner (at Stuart's) I burst out into a sweat like tropical rain—that literally *frightened Stuart* ; after this one of the 4 or 5 most violent bowel-seizures I have ever had—the evening I grew well again. Yesterday was a day of hot drizzle, and I was puffed and asthmatic the whole day and I doubt not if anything had happened to afflict me, I should have had another attack. I dined at Godwin's with Hamilton Rowan an excellent man— But I expect my author back,

¹ I have been unable to determine who this author was.

² Grosvenor Bedford, Southey's friend.

and have not time to say what I mean to say, so to-night or tomorrow I will sit down and give you a gossip-journal of what I have done and where been— I received a cheering letter from Sara. My love to her and she will send me in her next a little inventory of the clothes, I have with me. Today I dine at the beastly hour of $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 at General Hastings' to meet a man piping hot from France, an escaped prisoner. Here comes my author

So God bless you and S. T. COLERIDGE.

He is gone to the necessary. I will, therefore, only say that Poole is gone out of town for a week and Rickman returned and that I dine with R. on Friday, and as much oftener as he will invite me, it being among my main wishes to be as much as possible with him.

Lamb has left off drinking and is unwell and low spirited. Tell Sara, that Miss Wakefield had arrived at Dr. Crompton's only two days before I came thither. Everybody loves her exceedingly. She asked after Sara with fervent earnestness.

I have not seen Longman. Somebody at his Saturday meetings was discussing you and me to the advantage of my genius, and Longman contrary to his custom could not bear it, and burst out like a flame "You may depend on it from *me* Sir ! who must know the two men, there is no comparison as to genius. Let it be one sheet to two volumes, Mr. Southey brings it or sends it to the *very hour*, whereas Mr. Coleridge etc., etc.

God love you, my dear Southey—etc.

LETTER 134

To JOHN RICKMAN.

[Original letter, Huntington Library.]

[February, 1804.]

MY DEAR SIR

I take the liberty of inclosing the Inclosed with a request, that you would have it franked—poetry being a poor Trade, which Buchanan assigns as a reason for the old maid-

ship of the 9 Muses—they had no dowries. It gave me more pain than an event not attributable to my own neglect ought to have done, that I could not be with you on Monday—tho' that not being in my power, I was not sorry to remain a few days longer absent from the Bustle of London, with two such unaffectedly good people, as Sir George and Lady Beaumont, the more so, as I have learnt as much from Sir George respecting Pictures and Painting and Painters as I ever learnt on any subject from any man in the same space of Time. A man may employ time far worse than in learning how to look at a picture judiciously. I have been writing essays for the Volunteer,¹ which will appear forthwith. I am apprehensive, that you will think them too favorable to the Ministers, too violent against their opponents. I know full well, that you are not a man to return formal thanks to—yet you will not be disgusted with any man for saying simply what he feels really—And I have been much affected by the quiet promptness, with which you have caused a Trial to be made of my wife's Brother—an earnest desire to do his duty I am sure will not be wanting— Yours sincerely,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I return on Friday Noon.

¹ In another letter Coleridge says : " As soon as my Volunteer Essays and whatever of a *Vindiciae Addingtonianae* . . . are published, they shall be sent you without fail " (*Life and Letters of John Ruckman*, Orlo Williams, 1911, 105). These were probably essays for the *Courier*. Although no prose contributions to the *Courier* of this period are listed either by Mrs. H. N. Coleridge (*Essays on His Own Times*, 1850) or by T. J. Wise (*Bibliography of . . . Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 1913), the fact that Coleridge drew on Stuart for several sums of money (See Letters Nos. 135 and 143, Feb. 15, and March 27, 1804), and that " during part of his stay he was at the *Courier* office from 9 till four " (*Life*, 142) make it seem certain that he was engaged in newspaper work.

LETTER 135

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Dunmow, Essex.

*Tuesday, Feb. 15, 1804.*¹

MY DEAR SARA

I have not time to say with what glowing affection I was welcomed and have been treated by Sir G. and Lady Beaumont—nor how often we have talked of you, of the children and of Southey—who would meet in Sir G. Beaumont a man prepared to love the *person* as much as he now honors the *man*. I am too late to write—and yet will not let the post go off. I return to London on Friday morning—direct to the old place. I received your letter this morning—my eyes are still red with crying over it for joy and tenderness and sorrow of absence. O my sweet Hartley! my darling—my own, very own Hartley! and my stump my pretty affectionate Derwent! You remember, I told you that he was just in the very same way on his first arrival at Grasmere, altho' I was then with him. My very heart is still trembling and my very heart thanks and loves you, my dear, for your letter—Be as minute about the children as you can—never let anything escape—I thought to have been quite at leisure here and to have written a set of long letters—but alas! Sir G. and Lady are bewitching company—My dear! I would have [you] draw as soon as you receive this letter on Daniel Stuart Esqre., Courier Office, Strand, London for 20*£*—payable to Mr. Jackson on order. I shall apprise Stuart and it will be duly honored—you may draw at six weeks' date, or even at a month's date. This will supply you with ready money, and pay off little bills and in a few weeks I will leave you debtless at Keswick, debts great and small, save that which we both owe to Southey for his vice-fathership. I have received another heart-withering letter of absolute despair from T. Wedgwood—

May God Almighty bless you my dear Sara and your ever faithful and anxious friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Feb. 15, 1804, was on Wednesday.

You told me nothing about sweet Sara—tell me everything—send me the very *Feel* of her sweet Flesh, the very look and motion of that mouth— O I could drive myself mad about her.

LETTER 136

To the WORDSWORTHS.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Life of Wordsworth* (Knight), ii. 13-14.]

Dunmow, Essex.

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 1804.

MY DEAREST FRIENDS

Oh what a pen ! I shall write as illegibly as dear Dorothy herself, whose darling letter I received this morning. I left the money for the payment of the cradle with the waiter of the King's Arms at Kendal, that same steady fellow whom you know, and who knows you very well. I believe that the King's Arms is the name of the Inn ; but it is that from which the cheap Liverpool coach goes. It *is* the King's Arms, for I have it down in my pocket book. He could not tell me where the man lived, but promised me that he would be sure to find him out the next day and pay him, and send *you* the receipt. You had better send the two lines which I will write at the end of the third page in to Mr. Dun, and let him call at the King's Arms with it, and no doubt, the waiter will pay him. I guess that the waiter has lost the card and forgotten the name, for he seems a very honest fellow. On my return to London I will immediately go about your watch business. The Border Ballads¹ were left by Lamb at Richard's² rooms a year ago. O my darling friends, I seem to see the image of that bridge as distinctly as if I were there—an image of a very sweet bridge I most certainly do. Bless you all ! My heart aches with love of you. You should have sent at once to the Cow pock institution. Shall I go and get some, and send it down to you with ample directions ?

¹ Scott's *Border Minstrelsy* was published in 1802-1803.

² Richard Wordsworth (1768-1816) brother of the poet.

I can send anything under two ounces free of postage when I am in London, and you may send *any weight* to me (only I would not have any one parcel exceed two ounces and a half) most carefully observing the following directions :—

1. Enclose the packet in a cover directed to Mr. Coleridge.
2. Enclose this in a cover directed to Jno. Rickman Esqre.
3. Enclose this in a cover directed to the Right Honble, The Speaker, Palace Yard, Westminster. Be sure to be accurate in this. A correspondent of Poole's (T. W.) neglected the *second cover*, and when the Speaker opened the letter, he found a letter for T. Poole Esqre. (The Speaker made letter smuggler to an unknown T. Poole Esqre.)¹

But common letters I would have you send as usual to No. 16. Abingdon Street. But Oh ! I conjure you, my dearest Dorothy and Mary ! as you love me, as you value my utilities when absent from you to set about making a copy of all William's MS. poems. I solemnly promise that no English eye shall behold a line of them, either before or after my Sicilian tour. Oh I feel, I feel what a treasure, what an inspiring Deity, they will be to me when I am absent. I would not talk thus warmly, if I did not know *how* much I am asking, therefore it is fit I should express how great the good will be.

I leave this place on Friday morning. I assure you, that Sir George Beaumont has often talked of William, his domestic happiness, and his height of uniqueness of poetic genius, till the tears have been in his eyes, and on Lady Beaumont's cheeks, who verily has a soul in point of quick, enthusiastic feeling, so much like to Dorothy's, only not Dorothy's powers. Yet she has mentioned many things to me, very, very interesting, concerning her early life and feelings. I am now going to ride. Last Friday I was dashed off my horse in Lord Maynard's Park, and the horse followed, now feeding, now looking at, and galloping after us. Sir G. got off and led his horse. Still, as he came up to us, kicking and plunging (I thought he was mad) for a mile and a half, we caught him at a gate, and when remounted, he

¹ See *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 128-132.

was mild as a lamb. I shall quit these good people with regret for London. I fix my eye with unalterable steadiness on Sicily or Madeira. There is no change of weather on which I am not made to *feel* the necessity of it. The day before yesterday, nay, on Sunday, I received a letter which disturbed me, and bad weather accompanying it, that night and the next I was attacked by my horrid night horrors ; and last night I was not quite free ; but through my mind being pleasantly tranquil I keep off these, yet every change of weather to wet or damp, or heavy or boisterous makes me as asthmatic as ever. God bless you ! I can write no more. This letter will cost you nothing ; it ought not indeed.

Finally, initially and medially (*à la mode* W. Taylor of Norwich).¹

LETTER 137

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Friday afternoon, February 17, 1804.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I am this moment returned from Dunmow, the only place I have been at for a long long time in which I have from my heart's heart wished you to be. I have wished it, indeed, at Rickman's but there you would have been in London and then you would not have been with such divine pictures and engravings as have made me almost an apostate to music. I found your letter on the table. Poor Godwin implicated me in the same sort of disrespect as he uttered against you, quite in *his way* without meaning any harm, but simply disclosing the unutterable bluntness and blindness of his intellect. But I will write you concerning him. Beyond all deniability I am a coward in giving pain : but what can you say to a man who comes and tells you his pecuniary comforts will probably be greatly affected by your doing this or that ? I shall call on Longman tomorrow— the King will certainly

¹ The remainder of this letter is cut off,

die.¹ Fox's coalition with the Grenvilles is avowed, and the Prince's life was last week despaired of from a frenzy fever, the consequence of three days' drinking, the two first claret and port did not affect him, or his rivals the D. of Norfolk and the E. of Guildford—on the third day they each drank 2 bottles of sherry, 2 of Madeira, and a bottle of Noyeau with several glasses of brandy, and the Hereditary Earl Marshall waved his flag triumphant over the prostrate Heir Apparent and the Earl. I expect to *write* to you tomorrow.

Now for business. My kindest love to *Sara senior*, and desire her to draw upon Stuart, in whose hands I shall deposit the money for a sum sufficient to pay *all* and *each* of all our Keswick Debts, with the exception of Mr. Edmundson's to whom I think it polite to write myself, and shall do it tomorrow, and for such a sum as will leave her about ten pound loose money. I would have the debts carried up to the present day. I mean Miss Crosthwaite's bill. George Fricker looks very well. I made a sort of a bustle with Poole, which did not do *much*, and I went and told his story plainly and simply to Rickman which did a great deal. For R. made Poole send for him, and I have great hopes that he will do and get forward. I had made up my mind upon it, and if this does not do I will strain every point of interest I have—for the young man is good and innocent, but I have great hopes of this. Don't be angry with poor G. who would fall prostrate and idolise you if you would—

Bless you and S. T. C.

LETTER 138

To JOHN RICKMAN.

[Original letter, Huntington Library.]

Tuesday, March 13, ½ past 1, [1804.]

MY DEAR SIR

I have left my name at your House—and finding no one here at the office I take the liberty of playing Scribe

¹ George III. was at this time suffering from a severe cold and his life was despaired of.

solo in it—just to inform you, that hopeless since our last conversation on the subject of getting my passage on board a King's Ship—hearing nothing of the appointment of any one—etc., I went to Sharp's yesterday and from thence went on the River to examine the accommodations of the Speedwell, a Merchant brig of only 130 Tons. The Cabin, a common room for the Captn, and three passengers, myself, a Gentleman—and a Lady, is a perfect *Bobadillo*—however, I had previously made enquiry after two much larger Vessels—but they could not *engage* to touch at Malta, tho' they thought it highly probable that they should—they were for Smyrna—whither I did not wish to go—for why? It would be out of my way; and I have no fancy at all for Plague Buboës— So weary of anxiety which had already been at work upon me for a week past, I engaged with the man, leaving 20£ as a Deposit. The fare is very high: 35 guineas exclusive of Wine and Spirits, and of Bedding—which will be 7 or 8£ more! As we were going on board, I asked the Captn. (John Findlay) whether he knew who the Captn. was appointed to convoy them. He said, he did not know *as yet*. This I took as a full confirmation of what I had indeed never doubted—namely, that no King's Ship had as yet been fixed upon. But on my return with him on Tower Hill I heard to my surprize and (momentary) consternation, that tho' he did not know the Commanding officer's Name, yet there had been a ship of War appointed, heaven knows how long—the Lapwing Frigate, to wit. I felt instantly and still feel that this Miss is absolutely and entirely my own fault—that I ought to [have] considered, that the Merchants and Captns. in the Mediterranean Trade must know the appointment as soon as it [is] known at all—and of course that I ought to have desired some one or more of *them* to apprise me thereof—which I might easily have done—whereas a Gentleman in the Navy office, or Admiralty, might easily *miss* the Information, and in the multiplicity of official Business easily and venially forget a thing not in the track of his Daily Concerns. I feel myself rash and blameable; but I console myself by thinking, that if I had known

of it, I have no rational data of Hope as to my having or procuring sufficient Interest to get on board her ; that I have no positive reason for supposing, that I should not have had as much money to pay for my passage on board the one, as on board the other, and if it was otherwise, that yet I shall be more my own Master on board the Brig—which if it be small, has proportionally a small Number of men—The voyage will be 8 or 9 weeks !!! a week of these at Gibraltar. The vessel leaves the *River* the latter end of the week—and before that time my Luggage (which is no great matter) must be sent on board ; but that more troublesome Luggage, my poor crazy whimsical Carcass, need not be at Portsmouth, *in all probability*, till the 22nd of this month. But I shall be informed before evening of the exact Day—

I hope, I shall have an opportunity of spending an hour or two with you tête à tête—or with Lamb, at least—which will be the same Thing unless it be a better one. Unless I pass any evening at your House, I shall be at Lamb's, *every evening* till the Time of my Departure from— $\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 or 9 to 12—or whatever hour later or earlier, the Genius of Comfort and Health may inspire or command.

I shall leave a Letter or two here tomorrow to be franked and I own, I feel a sudden Dip-down of old Indefatigable (the Heart, to wit) at the thought, that it will be [the] last for years—may be the last for ever. I have only a choice of Evils—had I stayed at home, my children would soon have been Orphans.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. If my heart had been as easy as my mind is active, I could have filled up those Latin words right quaintly.¹

Tobin is this Moment come in to beg you to dine with him on Saturday (is not that Speaker's Din.Day ?) or Monday, letting him know by tomorrow which day will be the more convenient.

¹ Referring to some Latin words which had been previously scribbled (not in Coleridge's handwriting) on the paper.

LETTER 139

To WILLIAM SOTHEY, 47 Upper Seymour St., Portman Square.

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby. A few lines published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, vol. xxvii. No. 2 (Nov. 1929)]

March 13, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR

.¹

I write now to intreat that you will be so good as to conciliate Sir Alexander Ball's² and General Valette's³ Protection to me. It has, at times, been a wandering wish of mine, (and I should perhaps have indulged it, but for my entire and utter want of Interest) to get some small place in Malta or Sicily. I did not care if it occupied half my time : for I have no wish to receive what I have not earned—a place, of course, for the performance of the Duties of which austere integrity and general information and sanity of mind were the chief Requisites. If I should see any opening, when abroad, I shall not be prevented from engaging your good offices in my Behalf, by my too deeply rooted dislike to call upon any man for any effort, still more on one, on whom I have no other claims than those derived from his own benevolence. Mackintosh put this into my head, by saying to me, that he thought, that if I had any sort of interest with the Governor at Malta I might probably without difficulty gain some little place or other that would at least liquidate my travelling expenses or rather voyaging expenses.

I will make a little book of half a dozen of mine and Wordsworth's poems for you by Thursday next, when I shall be at

¹ The passage herein omitted corresponds almost exactly with the first paragraph of the letter of the same date (March 13, 1804) to John Rickman, in which Coleridge outlines the plans for his trip to Malta.

² Sir Alexander Ball (1757-1809) after a distinguished record in the navy captured Malta from the French in 1799. He became the first Civil Governor of the Island, and died there, beloved of the Maltese, in 1809. From early in July, 1804, to January, 1805, Coleridge was Private Secretary to Ball; and from January 18 to September 6, 1805, he was Public Secretary. Coleridge admired Sir Alexander Ball tremendously and has left an affectionate record of him in the *Friend*.

³ General Valette was the Military Commander at Malta at this time.

the Lecture in the Hope of seeing you. I shall direct this to Seymour Street with a request that it may be forwarded. I heard from Wordsworth this morning; but the letter was written before my last had reached him. I trust, you will have heard from him before I see you—as I cannot endure the thought of taking the check out of it's Retirement till you have received the legal obligation for it's payment in November—¹

With best and kindest remembrances to Mrs. and Miss Sotheby,

Believe me, my dear Sir,
With high not unaffectionate esteem
Very sincerely yours
S. T. COLERIDGE.

If Mr. Sotheby should not be in town, or expected tomorrow, this is to be *forwarded* to him.

LETTER 140

To JOHN RICKMAN.

[Original letter, Huntington Library. Published in part, *Life and Letters of John Rickman*, Orlo Williams, 1911, 106.]

Wednesday, March 14, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR

I thank you for your kind note : I received the letters duly. Tomorrow I must *dine* with Stuart as I shall be at his

¹ Sotheby had advanced £100 to Coleridge, Wordsworth standing as security. On March 12, 1804, Wordsworth wrote to Sotheby : " Agreeable to a request of Mr. Coleridge I take the liberty of sending you, enclosed, a promissory note for 100£ which he informs me you have been so good as to advance for him. I have taken the liberty of drawing the note payable at *ten* months, which is two months later than the latest time mentioned by Mr. Coleridge ; but Mr. Coleridge did not know that it would be full as easy for me to advance the money at present as at any time earlier than ten months from this date. I do not doubt, my dear Sir, that you sympathize deeply with me in the melancholy occasion which calls such a man from his friends and country." The promissory note accompanying this letter, reads as follows : " I promise to pay Wm. Sotheby Esq., ten months after date, the Principal, and legal Interest of one hundred Pounds advanced by him to S. T. Coleridge on my account.
W. WORDSWORTH."

(The Wordsworth letter and promissory note are in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby.)

office arranging my own concerns till the very hour of dinner; but I will be with you by a quarter before 7 infallibly ; and Mary with Lamb will come with me. I have written the direction for the inclosed Letter below—lest it *should* be overweight with an envelope, tho' I believe, it would not.

The East India House has very politely made me a present thro' Mr. Charles Lamb, an *Eminent* in the India Service, of a hundred or so of Pens : and if the House of Commons would do the same, with a stick or two of Wax, in short, any little additament that might be made instrumental in the service of G. Britain by spreading and increasing it's literary action upon the world, I should consider as a flattering mark of respect from that Honorable Assembly—and should prize it considerably more than even a Vote of Thanks and recommendation for a Title, unless a good warm Salary or Estate were the gilt Lace to my *Coat* of Arms.

Your's, my dear Sir,

With affectionate well-wishing and sincere esteem

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 141

To JOHN RICKMAN.

[Original letter, Huntington Library.]

Saturday Night, ½ past 10. March 17, [1804.]

MY DEAR SIR

So little notion had I that the Papers, you gave me last night on parting from you, had any reference to *me*, so fully persuaded that they were public papers and in some way connected with the conversation of the evening which had deeply impressed me, that being extremely busy all the morning I never looked at them, reserving them for my return from Sir G. Beaumont's, which I knew would be at an early Hour, and when I should be alone and quiet. This afternoon at 4 o'clock on emptying my pockets in order to *lighten* myself I glanced with my eye on the direction for the first time ; and I am unable to express to you the odd feeling of great pleasure, and stinging vexation, that (now one, now

the other) worked to and fro upon me, when I found that they contained all Wordsworth's Manuscript Poems for me—and *sent thro' you*. Be assured, my dear Sir ! I never meant, never gave permission, that any thing should be sent thro' you,¹ save only that copy of my *Christabel* for Lady Beaumont and which I did not do merely to save myself any expense, but to do the thing in a handsome way to her Ladyship. So far the contrary, I had desired them long ago to be sent me by the Coach ; and on Monday last receiving a letter from Wordsworth directed Abingdon Street, I instantly wrote to him, pressing him to send these poems (Heaven knows, the best and deepest Comfort and companionable Support I shall have during my long weary absence) but to direct them not to 16 Abingdon St. (I suppose, he must have missed a Letter or blundered—or he could not have done *that*)—but to direct them to me at the Porter's Lodge Barnard's Inn. It is as compleat a γλυκύπικρον, as I have had for some time—As it is the first, so it shall be the last—Lamb can tell you, how reluctantly and *corn-treadingly* I ever avail myself of any privilege of a Friend or Acquaintance, as well knowing the Indelicacy with which many will use it, and the painful situations, it may involve and often has done. I shall have impressed you very scurvily if you could believe me insincere, or not deeply sincere, when I say, that this circumstance disturbed in no small degree the recollection of as instructive and abiding an Evening, as I have passed these many many months. From the kind manner in which you gave them [the papers mentioned above] me, I trust, that nothing painful to yourself has happened, and believe me, dear Sir, with unfeigned esteem and kindest remembrances, your

Friend and Servant

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Coleridge had apparently forgotten his specific directions to the Wordsworths to send the MS. poems via Rickman. See letter to the Wordsworths of February 16, 1804, p. 305, and *Letters*, ii. 459.

LETTER 142

To WILLIAM SOTHEBY, *Lodge, Loughton, Essex.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby.]

*Saturday Afternoon,
March 24, 1804.*

MY DEAR SIR

$\frac{1}{2}$ past 2. Consequently not 20 minutes since I quitted you ; but it would be needle-hunting in a Hay-load to attempt to find you. This moment (I have not yet read the whole of the Note) I have heard from Mr. Sharp—" My dear Sir ! I have seen Captn. Findlay— The Speedwell is gone to Gravesend and will be at Portsmouth if the present wind continues on Tuesday—The Captain says, you must go hence on Tuesday Morning or Evening, and therefore you must *secure immediately a place* at the Angel Inn behind St. Clement's Church in the Strand. The Tuesday Morning Coach goes very early—the Mail at 7 in the evening etc."—So perish the smaller and even so the larger schemes of human Hope and human Foresight. This Night before I lay my head on the pillow, I will send you, that one Poem at least.

I am somewhat agitated, but let us have faith, that as not even a Sparrow's feather falls to the ground without a calculated Purpose—a purpose existent from Eternity, so likewise the lesser Gains and Losses, Disappointments and sudden Pleasures, of the moral World begin motions that propagate themselves to infinity—and the unfelt agitation of the air from the falling Feather is a necessary and therefore as important to an omniscient mind, as the storm that shatters a Continent into an Archipelago.

I would still spend a day with you—if 'twere only the *Time* to be considered—but two days having been cut off, I must husband my spirits—and from Sunday Afternoon, 4 o'clock, at which time I hope to have done all that respect, civility, and my own Business require of me, I shall stay within doors, yea, and keep my mind and faculties *within their doors too*, or at farthest allow them only a ticklish

Convalescent's Walk in the Garden or on the House-leads, till the hour of my departure from [England]— I will not now bid you farewell or address ought to your Wife and Daughter for whom I entertain a respect which, I trust, suffers no diminution or alloy of depreciation from the pleasurable Affection, which *will* interfuse itself—for I know that I should again repeat it—and I have again to write—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Will it not be making myself of far too much consequence to suppose that this accident breaks up your engagement on Wednesday? You must write and let me know what I am to say to Sir G. and Lady Beaumont.

LETTER 143

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

*Courier Office,
Tuesday Afternoon, ½ past 2,
March 27, 1804.*

MY DEAR SARA

I *have* been very ill, having had a relapse, but am now pretty well, only weak. I have taken my place in the Portsmouth Mail for tonight, and expect to sail on the 30th, but of this there is small certainty. Of course I shall inform you of my arrival and with it convey all I can learn. Sir G. and Lady Beaumont have been, in strict and moderate words exceedingly good and kind to me during my indisposition—but of this in detail hereafter. I have advised “Davison, Noel, Templer, Middleton, Johnson and Wedgwood, Bankers, 34, Pall Mall London”, that your drafts are to be honoured to whatever amount I am entitled to draw—and that you will advise them thereof when you draw—you have an 100£ to draw this year—which you will draw whenever you like it or want it. Perhaps, it would be as well to draw for 50£ a time, at least, as it will be right for you to post pay your letter of advice. “Gentlemen I have drawn on you a draft payable to Mr—or order so many days after date, in

the name and in the account of S. T. Coleridge— Sara Coleridge.

To Mess. Davison, Noel, Templer & Co., Bankers, Pall Mall, London ”—

You may make your note what date you like ; a month, 5, 6, 8 weeks after date—in short which you like. 5 or 6 is as good as ready money—

A small parcel will come for Hartley soon and a letter from me.

You must not draw for more than the 60*£* on Stuart as I have been obliged to take up the 20*£*—so many petty expenses have accumulated—for example a pair of green spectacles and case 21 shillings, a hat 26—boots 36, Medicines, Spirits, Servants, etc., etc.

My love to all. I will write from Portsmouth, God speeding me thither

Heaven bless you and our Darlings
and S. T. COLERIDGE.

Do not be uneasy about money—If you want more you shall have more.

LETTER 144

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Ten lines published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, xxvii. No. 2, November 1929, 201-202.]

Crown Inn, Portsmouth.

Wednesday Morning 10 o'clock March 28, 1804.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I arrived here this morning between 7 and 8. My ship it seems is not yet in sight, but is confidently expected in the course of the day— Where my Captain is I cannot say, but the convoy is expected to sail tomorrow. So much the better for me. This is a noisy dirty town ; and if any accident should put off the convoy, a very improbable event, I should take the first passage boat for Upper Ride in the Isle of Wight, and stay there. I hope I shall know the wheres and

hows before the Post goes out to-day : if not, I shall delay the Letter.

Sir G. Beaumont continues in town about a month or five weeks. When you come to town, be sure [to] call on him—corner of South Audley Street, Grosvenor Square, the corner that is in the Square. He himself mentioned it twice—that if you came to town during his sojourn there, he hoped you would call on him. He and his Lady are worth going a good way to see for their own sakes, and the Pictures in his Picture Room are most exquisite—The famous Rubens, two Claudes, a Gaspar Poussin—yet Sir George's own Landscapes hang by them undishonoured while the Niobe of Wilson, which in poetic composition and form is a first rate and sublime landscape, with the exception of sharp-shooters in the clouds, yet in colouring looks quite mealy and pasty by comparison— I have no doubt that he will shew you or procure you to see the two or three famous collections, Lord Ashburnham's,¹ Angerstein's,² etc.—But however this may be, do not forget to call on Northcote and beg to see the portrait of Lorenzo de Medici's imagined to be by Browrind ; and of Commyn's the picture cleaner in Pall Mall (Sir G. would give you a note to him) to see a Landscape by Salvator Rosa, if he still have it in his keeping, and above all the picture of St. Helena dreaming the vision of the Cross, designed by Raphael and painted by Paul Veronese. That is a Poem indeed !

(My address, S. T. Coleridge, Esqr. Dr. Stoddart's, Malta.)

As for myself, I am somewhat better ; but still weak and stupid, and probably should be all the better for a few Hours' sound sleep. I will therefore defer the remainder of the Letter until something to say to you comes from without or rises up within. God love you, dear Friend !

¹ Lord Ashburnham's collection of pictures was offered to the National Gallery for purchase in 1846. See *The Making of the National Gallery*, Charles Holmes and C. H. C. Baker, 1924, 16.

² John Julius Angerstein's collection of thirty-eight pictures was purchased by the Government for £57,000, and formed the nucleus of the National Gallery. Sir George Beaumont not only urged the purchase, but offered to the nation his own valuable collection as well. See *op. cit.* 2.

While I was writing, Mottley, a dashing bookseller, a booted, buck-skin-breeched Jockey, to whom Stuart gave me a letter of most urgent recommendation (he is their Portsmouth correspondent) called—he is a man of wealth, and influence here, and a knowing Fellow. He took me thro' the Dock-yards, and I was lucky enough to be present at a *Heat*, i.e. at the welding a huge *Faggot* of small latten of red hot Iron into the Shafts of the Anchor of a man of war. It was truly sublime—the enormous Blaze, the regular yet complex intertwined strokes of between 20 and 30 men, with their huge Flail-hammers, the astonishment how they could throw them about, with such seeming wildness without dashing out each other's brains, and how they saved their eyes amidst the shower of sparks—the Iron *dripping* like a millwheel from the intense white heat—verily it was an unforgettable scene. The poor men are pitiable slaves—from 4 in the morning they work till 9 at night, and yet are payed less than any other in the yard. They all become old men in the prime of manhood. So do the rope-makers who get only work from 7 till noon. The rope-room is a *very low* broad room, of a length far too great for the eye to see from one end to the other—it gave me a grand idea of an Hindustan Cavern. A fire machine has been lately introduced, after a rebellion among the men, and but for the same deplorable delusion two thirds of that labour might be done by machines, which now eats up the rope-men like a Giant in a fairy tale. On my return I took an early dinner, or rather—attempted to take it—my stomach bad, and it is possible that a wretched steak was too abrupt a transition from the dinners, I have lately been almost habituated to, tho' I have never once since I left Keswick broke thro' my rule of eating only of one thing that has had life. If I eat fish I eat neither fowl nor flesh—and so on. I have been sleeping on the chair and have caught a cold in my head. No news of the convoy. Tomorrow I dine with Mottley, who was engaged in the country to-day. He is really a civil fellow, without any professions, or show. Yesterday as I was returning with Stuart from Hammersley's (the Bankers) we met and I was introduced

to Sheridan whose manners are startlingly like those of Hatfield, and like him his very first words were a compliment—his next a promise—his last united both. I could take that man in, but I'll be damned if he could take me in. *Inter nos* Stuart who knows him well says that he really did intend to take and introduce me to Addington.¹ But of this say *no word*. It would have affected you deeply to have seen the manner in which Sir George parted from me. His valet packed up everything, sent off everything and did not leave till I entered the mail. He stocked me in wines in stout bottles and lock up cases, with medicine, portable soup and [an] elegant thing to lock up my letters, papers etc., etc., and when I was at Dunmow Sir George thrice entreated me to accept of an 100£, the which I mildly but firmly refused—but on the morning I left Dunmow as I was going into the coach the servant delivered me a letter from Sir George with the 100£ included in it, and the Letter itself for its delicacy, deliberate affection, and elevated good sense “was worth twice the sum”, to use a very vulgar phrase. Stuart has been equally kind and zealous: that man has [. . . ? . . .] Friendship for me. It may seem madness in me to wish more Friends: yet who can know Rickman that *sterling Man*, and not desire something more than an acquaintances. Mine is a severely moral wish. I shall think of him at Malta whenever the sea-breeze blows upon me and braces me. He does not altogether like me: and as I live I have one pleasure in it for I know the sincerity, the bottomness of my own feelings. Too often have I mistaken in myself sympathy for friendship.

P.S. I will write again to *you*, but to Sara I shall not write till I reach Gibraltar—if I reach it— O Southey from Oxford to Greta Hall—a spiritual map with our tracks as if two ships had left Port in company. It is not for either of us to do it; but a Poet might make a divine allegory of it. I have said nothing of Edith, but that which you let no one know of in the bottom of your heart, that same anxiety and hope and fear flutters at the bottom of mine. S. T. C.

¹ Henry Addington, first Viscount Sidmouth (1757-1844), an active politician, had become in 1801, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was created Viscount in 1805.

LETTER 145

To JOHN RICKMAN.

[Original letter, Huntington Library]

Portsmouth, Friday, April 6, Noon, [1804.]

MY DEAR SIR

I am off ¹—pray, write to Southey and tell him that I am off, and well, and bless them all !—Let me say one thing—the only severe pang, I suffered, on account of the pacquets, I suffered at the time of opening them, before I knew that you had written or would write. You could have written nothing but what you did write and if you had written nothing, I should have suffered much much more. This on my *Honor* ! The only thing I shall request of you will be this—to suffer two or three double Letters to be inclosed to you, each at an interval of six or seven days—and to have them franked S. T. Coleridge, Esqre., at J. C. Mottley's, Esqre., Portsmouth—and the same *one once* in 5 or 6 weeks, during my absence : viz. whatever Poetry Wordsworth writes in that space of time, which cannot make a large Letter ; Mr. Mottley, who has been exceedingly kind, will forward them to Malta free of expense.

Tell George Fricker to write to Keswick to his Sisters—and that I have been trying to do some thing for him. I meant to have written him ; as to the means of *de-ignorancing* himself. I have been trying to get him a place in the Sick and Wounded office (but that I would not mention to him). Mottley will write if it succeeds : and the Lad will take your advice. I will write by the first opportunity—My dear Sir ! different constitutions breed different manners—we must judge by actions. There are *Hatfields* and likewise there are *Iagos*—Whatever shape Virtue can assume, Vice will counterfeit—You *do* judge by actions— I will try to do so—and not love in haste.

Wherever I am, I shall remember you ; for in simple nakedness of Heart I respect you and with a feeling of affection.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ The *Speedwell* sailed from Portsmouth on April 9, 1804, but storms and wind delayed the trip and it was May 18, before Coleridge reached Valletta Harbour, Malta.

LETTER 146

To WILLIAM SOTHEYBY, 47, *U. Seymour St., London.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheyby. Published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2, November, 1929.]

Malta, July 5, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR

I hope, that Mr. Laing who returns to England with young Ball, will find you out. Mr. L. is a truly amiable, well-informed young clergyman who has in fact been Sir Alexander's Secretary as well as Tutor of his son. From him you will hear everything of Malta—and as soon as I get to Sicily, I shall write to you. Your Letters to Sir A. B. and General Valette produced every effect that Letters could possibly do—my extreme low spirits and langour have prevented me from hitherto cultivating the general's acquaintance as much as I ought and wished to have done—for he was very attentive and polite, and I have no doubt would do anything to serve a man so introduced by you. I have hitherto lived with Dr. Stoddart, but tomorrow shall take up my residence at the Palace, in a suite of delightfully cool and commanding Rooms which Sir Alexander was so kind as not merely to offer me but to make me feel that he wished me to accept the offer. I have been writing for him to the last moment—an excuse for this brief scrawl than which there might be a hundred worse I am sure, in your opinion. I had from Gibraltar to Malta a most distressful Passage of almost continual illness, and at one time I expected to die—and God be praised that time was far enough from the most unhappy, I have lately passed. Since my arrival I have never had those sharp illnesses, I used to have in England, and since I have revolutionized my system, that is to say, forced myself to eat my meals and to take a few glasses of Port wine after dinner, bathed regularly at or before sunrise, read very little, brooded less, and tried not to be idle a moment, but always either to be actually writing, or taking exercise, or in company, I have been perceptibly better—my breathing less smothered, and I am less apt to sink at once into nervous

dosings, with twitches etc. I cannot expect that greatly as something or other within me, stomach, or liver, or mesentery is deranged, I can establish my health otherwise than very slowly, but it is greatly in my favor that this very hot weather (the Thermometer 86 in the shade) agrees with me. I am not at all oppressed or *discomfortized* by it—and, I believe, I am the only Englishman in the Island that can say this. When I write from Sicily, I hope I shall be able to send a yet more cheerful account, and to tell you not only how I am, but likewise what I have done.

Meantime remember me with respectful affection to Mrs. Sotheby and Miss Sotheby, and believe me, my dear Sir, whether sick or well, in Malta or in England I remember your kindnesses with pleasure as well as gratitude for I feel that I am not unworthy of them—with very affectionate esteem

Your obliged and attached Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Sir A. Ball is a very extraordinary man—indeed a great man. And he is really the abstract Idea of a wise and good Governor. The Ministers were in luck. Merciful Heaven! what wretches they send out as Consuls to the States of Barbary—the seat and bustle-place of French intrigue—and thither they send to check the picked Agents of the French Government—a Mr. Langford—whose Brawls with his wife, and notorious Follies drive every servant out of his house—a man the laughing-stock of all Malta! “O he is only a Barbary Consul!” These “onlies” threaten our country terribly, my dear Sir! and if you have any influence with any person about Government, you would act the part of a true Patriot in pressing on them the necessity of sending out men of Talents and character to all the coasts of [the] Mediterranean—Fools *that are* to be provided for had better be pensioned at once; the nation would save millions by the scheme.

P.S. Sir A. has repeatedly told [me] that if any place should be vacant, he would give it me, and has offered me the Salary of the under Secretary during his absence, which may be about two months including his Quarantine, and indeed

has given me the power to draw for the 2 months salary—that is to say 50*£*. But this I do not intend doing.

LETTER 147

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

Malta, August 4, 1804.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

General Oakes sets off, almost without notice, for England, part of the way overland. I have only time to say that I am and have been most anxious to hear from you and concerning you and *yours*: that I have received *no letters*, some evil chance having intercepted them or sent them to the Fleet off Toulon—I received the box with the German pocket books, and O bitter disappointment not even a scrawl or a single bit of paper in it—and I kept it unopened almost a whole day, my heart beat so violently with expectation that I feared to see the Letters, of which I doubted not to find many, for I supposed the box to have been put up by Mottley. I continue free from Disease, but I have reason to know that it is because the diseasing causes are absent, and not that I have as yet gained any strength to bear up against them. The violent Heat does not disagree with me—I know what [it] is by the Thermometer, but I do not feel it, and no doubt I have better things to hope for from the late autumn and winter. I go to Sicily next week—have been for the last six weeks domesticated with Sir A. Ball, who is exceedingly kind to [me]. I live when in the country, which I am 9 days out of 10, at the Palace of St. Antonio 4 miles from La Valletta, when in La Valletta at the Palace there—and if living in lofty and splendid rooms be a pleasure, I have it—I hope to have an opportunity of writing to Sara in the course of the next week, but I must not let this slip by—O my sweet children! and I know nothing of them. May God Almighty bless you

and S. T. COLERIDGE.

Mrs. Coleridge will open this, if Mr. S. be absent.

LETTER 148

To SIR ALEXANDER BALL

[This letter and the one following were copied by Mr. Lushington (a brother of Henry Lushington, Chief Secretary to the Government of Malta during the years 1847-1855) and sent to E. H. Coleridge. In a letter accompanying these copies of Coleridge's letters, Mr. Lushington remarked that the two letters were found quite by chance, and that others were probably to be found at the Palace. In the hope of finding the originals of these letters as well as others, I went to Malta in 1931 to search the records; but Professor Scicluna of the Public Library and Sir Augustus Bartello, the Acting Prime Minister, report that about 1900, a great number of official papers (supposedly unimportant, but not too carefully sorted) were deliberately destroyed to make room for newer documents. Inasmuch as no Coleridge letters were to be found after a careful search in the government offices in the Palace, in the archivist office, or in the Public Library, I am forced to the conclusion that they were destroyed along with other official papers, and I am convinced that no further records are extant. It is particularly deplorable that any of Coleridge's letters written at Malta were destroyed, because so very few of that period remain. His letters home often miscarried, and it is very difficult to trace his activities during this time. Published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

Syracuse, Monday Night, Nov. 5, 1804.

DEAR SIR

On Saturday noon I saw from the Ramparts a small French Privateer bring into this harbour a merchant vessel under British colors. The Capt'n. and the crew of the Privateer appeared both in looks and manners as ill-conditioned Ruffians as could have been well brought together in one open Boat. I could not learn either on that day or the next by any Inquiry, which I had a right to make, that the legality of the Capture as far as it depended on the real character of the Captors had been at all examined into, any questions asked whether the acting commander of the Privateer was or was not commissioned by any belligerent Government, or any precautions taken which (perhaps from my ignorance of the usages of Neutral Ports) I had supposed to have been customary, both from the respect which every civilised Government owes to itself, and as a check upon Piracy, the common object of detestation with all Governments not absolutely barbarous. This morning I heard that the merchantman had been ransomed in a manner, that seemed to imply no great confidence in the Captors them-

selves as to the lawfulness of the Prize. Three or four American officers dined at Mr. Leckie's¹ at an unusually late hour ; and from one of them (Capt. Decater)—I heard that there was some disturbance on the Marina, that an English cutter was placed alongside of the French Privateer, the crew of which had fled to the Ramparts. Between 7 and 8 o'clock (immediately after our dinner) an officer came with the Governor's carriage entreating Mr. Leckie's presence instantly on the Marina. He went, and I with him, and on stepping out of the carriage I found by the Torches that about 300 soldiers were drawn up on the Shore opposite the English Cutter and that the walls etc. were manned. Mr. Skinner and two of his officers were on the rampart, and the Governor and a crowd of Syracusan Nobles with him at the distance of two or three yards from Mr. Skinner. After some conversation with Mr. Leckie the Governor desired to know if Mr. Skinner had received a Letter (see PA the paper enclosed in this letter)² from him. Mr. Skinner acknowledged the receipt, but in consequence of his not understanding Italian it had been left unread. The letter (in answer to Mr. Skinner's first letter marked—A) was sent for ; read and then interpreted by Mr. L. to Mr. Skinner. This letter Mr. Skinner will of course deliver to your Excellency ; it appeared to me a Letter of mere Evasion, with no definite meaning. Mr. Skinner then thro' Mr. Leckie demanded of the Governor that the Crew of the Privateer should be given up to him as Pirates, if they had acted without lawful authority, or, if the Privateer had acted with lawful authority, that authenticated copies of the Commission and other Papers appertaining should be delivered to him, for the British Government at Malta. The Governor promised that early tomorrow morning such examination should be made : that if the men were found guilty, they should be delivered up : if not, copies of the Papers on which their acquittal had been founded. It was then asked by Mr. Leckie whether or no the Governor

¹ G. F. Lecky (not Leckie, as Coleridge spells it) was His Majesty's consul at Syracuse ; cf. *Letters*, ii. 485 n.

² The enclosures mentioned in this letter and the one following were apparently not transcribed by Mr. Lushington.

meant to consider a pretended Commission given by a French General in a neutral port as a legal Commission. The Privateer pretended to no other ; and as Letters of Marque could not be legally given from a Neutral Port, either the Kingdom of Naples etc. must be at war with G. Britain or this could be no Commission. This question though repeatedly pressed and argued on the Governor would not answer, but he would send instantly to Palermo, that it might be decided by the Government there ; and it would be at least a month, before any answer could be expected. Mr. Skinner then demanded whether the Governor would secure the Crew of the Privateer till such time as a definite decision should be received. This the Governor refused. For this night they should be placed in the Lazaretto under a Guard ; and on the morning the papers should be examined. Further, he neither promised or said anything definite. He talked or rather screamed, indeed incessantly. I never witnessed a more pitiable scene of confusion, and weakness, of manifest determination to let the French escape, and of ridiculous attempts to do it with some shew of reason. Mr. Skinner then complained of want of respect to himself as a Commander of a British Vessel of War, no flag having been raised to him or return made to his Port signal on his entrance into the Harbour. For this the Governor promised complete satisfaction. He was wholly ignorant of it ; and would put the man in irons, to whose neglect of Duty this omission had been owing. So the Scene ended, for the Night. It is but justice however to notice the coolness, dignity and good sense, with which Mr. Skinner acted throughout the whole of the Business, and which formed an interesting contrast to the noisy Imbecility of the Governor, and the brutal Insolence of the Commander of the Privateer, who in a very indecent manner leapt from the Rampart on which he had been standing with his Crew, and threatened the Governor flinging back his own words upon him with tones and gestures of personal Insult, which drew from the Governor no other mark of resentment or word of animadversion, but a very timid “ *Basta ! basta* ” to which the Privateer (who spoke

Italian) answered "Basta ! basta ! Basta ! *non* basta !" and then re-mounted the wall.

How the affair will end, as far as the Governor is concerned in it, it is easy to foresee. The Commander of the Privateer will produce a real or feigned Paper from a French General at Taranto on which—tho' without deciding that the same is a *legal* commission he will acquit the Crew of Piracy, and suffer them to escape, and probably make a complaint against Mr. Skinner, if he should pursue them within the 24 hours etc.—etc. The policy of the Governor consists wholly in this—he says to himself, whatever is done to offend the French, however rightfully, the French are nigh at hand to punish, and certain to resent, whatever is done against the English by the Neapolitan Government he believes that the English Cabinet will never resent—"from the kind regard (I use his own words as nearly as I can render them) the good Sovereign of England has for our poor King." Whenever an argument is pressed, which cannot be answered, the substitute for an answer is a shrug of the shoulders and "nostro povero Re."

The same conduct is pursued with regard to the Americans, between whom and the English the most mortifying distinctions are made. For instance Capt. Craycroft was put in Quarantine because he came from Malta—the Americans from the same place have all Prattic [pratique] instantly. I was surprized to see Mr. Miller yesterday till I found that he had come with Capt. Chauncey. It is said that the Americans give false accounts of themselves ; but this is not true. No questions are asked that can draw out a true account, and even when by some accident the Truth is said, the Prattic Master is deaf to all but the answers to the previously concerted questions. At the time that the Americans were permitted to come on shore instantly on their arrival from Malta, the Governor was hourly expecting an order to put all vessels from Malta under a Quarantine of 29 days instead of eight, so great an alarm had the accounts of the Fever at Gibraltar spread. But of all this I shall write to your Excellency more at length by the first safe

opportunity from Messina, whither I am going tomorrow morning in company with Mr. Ricand—if I can see this affair settled before noon. For Mr. Leckie is obliged to go into the country to attend his sowing ; and it will be a satisfaction to Mr. Skinner if I see the original Papers, of which he is to have copies for me. Tomorrow morning early I go to the Marina, and shall give this Letter to Mr. Skinner and if anything else occur, I will write a second. Dear Sir ! I have not wholly deserved all that you must necessarily have thought of me, this is at least the 5th Letter, which I have written to you. But from Messina I hope to convince that I have neither been forgetful of you or of my Duty, as far as my Health and state of Spirits permitted. I hesitate to go to Naples, for which place you have been so good as to furnish me with a Letter ; but I will explain myself at length from Messina. With my most respectful and grateful Remembrances to Lady Ball,

I remain, dear Sir,
with respectful attachment
your obliged and grateful
humble serv.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 149

To SIR ALEXANDER BALL.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by Mr. Lushington and sent to E. H. Coleridge. Published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

*L'Hirondelle, Quarantine Harbour, Malta,
Thursday Morning, November 8, 1804.*

As we cannot go on shore and Captn. Skinner has not had time to prepare his papers so as to be able to send them to your Excellency sufficiently clear without the aid of explanation by word of mouth, I have thought it best to finish the account of the affair which I had begun on Monday Night and carried on as far as the affair itself had extended. On Tuesday Morning Mr. Leckie feeling the delicacy of his situation as a Sicilian subject and a man under special

obligations to the King of Naples declined further interference in the business, unless he should be directly desired by the Governor and as an interpreter merely, I waited therefore on the Governor myself, and found him and his Counsellors in extreme confusion, three out of four talking at once. The Governor speaks very fair Italian and his enunciation, however rapid from passion and impatience of mind, is yet always unusually distinct. I had therefore no difficulty in understanding him. From him though with great difficulty in consequence of his passionate gestures, ejaculations, digressions, long stories about Lieutenant *Spencer* etc., I learnt at last, that the Board of Health had wished to remove the Privateer and the Crew to another part of the Harbour, whither Captn. Skinner could not follow, and that Captn. Skinner had positively refused to permit them ; but from the time of his landing to that very moment had kept his Guns, with the Tampions out, directly pointed at the Privateer, almost as it were within Pistol shot of the Batteries. At the same time the Officer, who acts as the Governor's Secretary and who is comparatively at least a man of sense shewed me Captn. Skinner's first Letter—which at first a little surprised me, as in this the only demand made was the liberation of the two vessels taken by the Privateer—to which it appeared certainly a sufficient answer, that the two vessels were not in that Harbour, nor in any place within the authority or indeed knowledge of the Governor of Syracuse. I saw however the grounds on which Captn. Skinner had proceeded. He knew that tho' the vessels were not in the Harbour, yet that large sums of money as well as valuable stores extorted and pillaged from the two Vessels were on board the Privateer : and thought it his Duty therefore to prevent their escape till such time as their conduct should be examined into. I know too myself from good authority that the Privateer had no other commission, but a pretended one from Govoni St. Cyr, issued from the neutral port of Taranto. I had called on Commodore Prebbell, and seen five other American Captains, and they all separately, as well as the American Consul, had assured

me that this was no legal commission and that the Privateer Crew were mere Pirates. Likewise it was known to many that this very commission had been recalled by the French Consul at Palermo in consequence of a general order from Buonaparte not to issue Letters of Marque to vessels under 50 Ton, and to recall all such as had been previously issued. I thought it prudent therefore to turn the whole attention as much as possible on the utter want of legitimate character in the Privateer. The Governor desired me at last to go to Captn. Skinner and to desire him to communicate in writing his wishes and demands respecting the Crew and Vessels. I accordingly went, and having consulted with Captn. Skinner wrote the Demands, of which I enclose the Copy marked A. I read them to Captn. Skinner, and asked him if the words conveyed his full meaning, and not mine, and it being what he wished, he signed it, and after some useless time wasted at the Governor's I went home. Mr. Leckie translated it—I transcribed the translation fairly, and took a copy of the original, and sent with it the Translation to the Governor. I found him himself in the Health Office on the Marina complaining bitterly, that he had brought down the originals of the Privateer's Papers and copies, and that Captn. Skinner was still dissatisfied. On speaking however to Captn. S. I found that this was a mistake originating in the Governor and Captn. S. not understanding each other. I therefore at the Captn.'s desire examined the original Papers, and collated them line for line with the copies, and delivered them with the Letter which had been sent to me for Captn. S. in answer to his demands (see Answer B.) I knew beforehand that the Assessor a man of the very worst character and notoriously the creature of the French, would declare the Papers regular and the commission good, though without assigning any one reason ; and upon this opinion of the Assessor the Governor would found his detention or non-detention of the Privateer. Accordingly, I advised Captn. Skinner to restate his reasons for his full belief of the piratical character of the Privateer, and the little claim it had, to protection from any neutral or even civilised port. For

to fix the attention upon this, I saw, was the only way to place the measures of the British Cutter in a point of view, from which they would seem justifiable. The Assessor, on whose opinion all was to depend, I had conversed with in the morning ; and so had Leckie who came in about Noon. It is strictly fact that he had not even heard the names of any one of the Books, which are allowed to contain the principles of the public Maritime Laws of Europe, nor could he say, on what principles he meant to decide on the regularity or irregularity of the Papers of the Privateer. The opinion of the Assessor (see Papers C., D.) was at length obtained, just as Mr. Skinner's last letter was sent off, and with it the opinion—the Governor's refusal to detain even for an hour the Privateer, or the Crew. Of course nothing further was to be done, and as soon as I had taken a copy of the letter (see Paper E.) I put up my Things hastily, and instead of going to Messina have returned to Malta, thinking that I might be of some service perhaps to Captn. Skinner in the explanation of the business and that if advisable, I might as easily get to Messina from La Valetta as from Syracuse. We left the Port of Syracuse about 11 o'clock on Tuesday Night—and with the Maltese Vessels that were ready to accept convoy, and one of which had been ransomed for 400 dollars an hour before Captn. Skinner's arrival at Syracuse—We arrived before Valetta at 8 o'clock, and were instantly put in Quarantine—

I remain with usual devotion, dear Sir,
Your obliged and grateful humb. Serv.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I have mentioned and inclosed all the papers, excepting the *Petition* delivered by your Excellency to Captn. Skinner, which was read by the Governor and of which he took a Copy. This Captn. Skinner will redeliver to your Excellency.

P.S. I have now inclosed that *Petition* (Pap. 1.) and likewise the Governor's Letter to your Excellency.

LETTER 150

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

December 12, 1804.

DEAR SARA

I will not occupy much of the short letter I have time to write, in expressing what anguish even to bodily disease I have suffered by the almost total failure of my Letters from England, the *certain* loss of *one* large parcel sent by me homeward from Sicily, which was taken by an Algerian and my papers not improbably at Paris by this time and no certainty of the other. A convoy will leave this place in less than a fortnight when I shall write at full. This letter I send to the fleet in *hope* that it may come to hand by a Russian Officer of my acquaintance. I returned or rather was abruptly recalled from Syracuse, Nov. 7, just as the carriage was at the door in which I was going to Messina, and thence to visit the island. I was there about 3 months chiefly at Syracuse, or within forty miles of it but I have been twice on the top of Mount Etna, and if I had gone on to Messina, I should have been just in time to have seen the eruption of Vesuvius. The fatigue of ascending Etna is the only thing that has not been exaggerated etc., etc. Of Sicily in general all is exaggerated grossly except the abominableness of the government, and the vice and abject wretchedness of the people. I have been strenuous in awakening the government to the true character and vices of the Court of Naples, for the last 4 months, yet still I have reason to fear that the cowardice and ignorance of Ministers, their improper choice of foreign Agents and a sort of stupid personal feeling for the King and Queen of Naples will throw Sicily into the hands of France, if even at this moment it is not done. My health is *very greatly* improved in this heavenly climate—the trees are loaded with oranges now in the state for plucking, and La Valetta echoes with cries of green peas—peas cried in Arabic in December. The last week was very cold and rainy and I suffered from

it—but now it is exactly like our pleasantest days in Autumn. Were I happy, I should grow stout, but tho' I am tranquil, I do not know what it is to have one *happy* moment, or *one* genial feeling. Not one, so help me God! No visitation of mind in fancy, but only the same dull gnawing pain at the heart—sometimes, indeed, tho' seldom relieved by a flow of tears when I can cry aloud to myself—My children my children.

I am still an inmate of the Palace, tho' I sleep and study in a sort of garret in the Treasury commanding a most magnificent view of open sea, and lakelike harbour as grand and impressive as a view can be without trees, rivers or green fields. I only however stay here till a suite of rooms can be fitted up for me in the Palace—My *old* ones were given in my absence to Commissioner Otway. What I am to receive I scarcely know. I have had £50 but my various expences in Sicily, bedding, 2 pair of sheets, mosquito curtain etc., and for clothes (as I dine at the Palace as confidential Secretary of the Government every day)—as well as for the little comforts I must have in my own room and the expence of my servant, obliged to draw upon Stuart for £50, which however I hope to replace by the next convoy—at all events I shall send you £50 to pay my Life-Assurance and your mother. Out of this £100, however, which I have spent, you must understand that I have payed Dr. Stoddart an old debt of £25, which reduced it to £75. I guess that in a few days I shall have to receive a £100 as four months salary. I am constantly and even laboriously employed and the confidence placed in me by Sir A. Ball is unlimited. I am, if I do not cry off myself—to go into Greece at the beginning of January on a corn-commission for the island, and from thence thro' Albania along the Northern-shore of the Archipelago to Constantinople, thence up the Black Sea to the mouth of the Dnieper and into the Crimea, and possibly into the heart of Russia.¹ Captn. Leake is to be with me if he

¹ Coleridge did not go on this trip, but it is interesting to note that there is in the Public Record Office in London, an official communication of Sir Alexander Ball in which he announces his intention of sending "a Mr. Coleridge" on such a commission.

is not called off by other duties ; but it will be a most anxious business, as I shall have the trust and management of 70, or 80 thousand £, while I shall not have for my toil and perils more than 3 or 4 hundred £, exclusive of all my expences in travelling etc.—on the whole, if I could get off with honour, I would and shall make the attempt. I undertook it in a fit of despair when Life was a burthen to me. If I could make up my mind to stay here or to follow Sir A. B. in case that circumstances and change in the political world should lead him to Sardinia no doubt I might have about £500 a year, and live mainly at the Palace—but God ! O God ! if that Sara which we both know too well, were not unalterably my lot, how gladly would I prefer the mere necessities of life in England and these obtain by dint of effort—But since my health has been restored to me, I have felt more than ever how unalterable it is ! whatever and wherever I am, be assured that my first anxiety and prominent Duty will be to contribute everything in my power to make you as happy as I can compatibly with the existence of that health and tranquillity (joyless indeed both) on which the very power of doing anything for you must depend. I hope however to see more clearly the way before me in less than a fortnight. How I long for Letters from Southey and from Grasmere. O my children ! I cannot write their names. Even to speak of them there is an effort of courage. Remember me, of course, to Mr. Jackson, to Mrs. Wilson etc.—May God Almighty preserve your health and life for your own happiness and for the sake of our dear children. I remain faithful to you and to my own honour in all things, and am most anxiously and affectionately your friend and more than friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 151

To DANIEL STUART, *Courier Office, Strand, London.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 51-54.]

May 1, 1805.

MY DEAR STUART

I have had three weeks and more, notice of the Convoy for England. The first ten days or so I have been occupied with public Letters and Memorials ; so much so as to be at night almost too tired, my spirits too exhausted to undress myself. The last eleven or 12 days I have been very ill ; worse than I have been since my arrival in Malta, with the exception of a few days in Sicily. The fever has ended in a number of Boils, which have at length broke, and from being Torture are now only troublesome ; but under all this my stomach has been so injured, that I have taken no solid food for a fortnight past, and it is well for me if once a Day I can keep a little Broth on my Stomach. However, I am plainly tho' very slowly convalescent. Among several causes of my illness duly following or crowding on each other, the loss of my whole store of Papers in the Arrow, Archeron, and a Merchant Vessel may be counted as not the least ; having had another not unimportant packet respecting Sicily, Egypt and Africa directed to you, and after your perusal, to Sir G. Beaumont, burnt at Gibraltar among Major Adye's Papers. But of the last parcel (i.e., in the Arrow) I had written the greater part in times stolen from sleep. But enough !

In the last Letter, which I received from you, I was affected and alarmed by the state of my accounts—Mr. White's assurance, £61. 11. 5. I never dreamt of it's exceeding £54. I immediately retracted my Bill for 50£ on you ; and it never would have been presented but for the unfortunate Loss of Letter after Letter. I have sent a duplicate of the Order at the Top of this Letter in another which will be, I hope, delivered to you by Captn. Maxwell, of the Royal Artillery, an amiable and intelligent young man. Not less than 5 or 6 similar orders have been sent—so exceed-

ingly anxious have I been not to appear to make free with you in pecuniary matters. I meant to have sent 90£ to Mrs. Coleridge by this Convoy and have the money all ready but the violence of my fever, with the almost continual Sickness at Stomach, rendered me incapable of taking the proper means of procuring a right Bill. I have sent out even now, having only a few minutes to spare and if I succeed, will inclose it—which you will be so good as to remit to Mrs. Coleridge. If not, I will send it to-morrow (via Naples—by which I shall at all events send the duplicate). Sir A. Ball has been here and tells me that it must not be sent overland but should this Letter not arrive, you will greatly oblige me by at least remitting 50£ to Mrs. Coleridge, as I shall by means of Sir A. Ball, and by availing myself of every communication place the arrival of a good Bill out of all common Chance. I have scraped up, by hard and slavish Labor, about a hundred and fifty Pound, Maltese Currency ; or 130£ English, but would to Heaven ! I had never accepted my office as Public Secretary, or the former of Private Secretary. Even in a pecuniary Point of View I might have gained twice as much, and improved my reputation. But regrets are idle !

Pray write to Mrs. Coleridge—and say, that my Constitution is, I hope, improved by my abode here ; but that accidents, partly of an excess of official Labor and anxiety, partly from distress of mind at my not hearing from my friends, and knowledge that they could not have heard from me, etc., etc., has produced sad alteration in me for the worse, but that I shall dedicate the next three weeks to an unceasing effort to recover ground ; and some time about the end of May (dependent of course on vessels and the state of politics) I have resolved to return home overland by Naples, Ancona, Trieste and Germany ; that my heart is almost broken that I could not go home this convoy. All was resolved that I should—but the Gentleman, who is to be Public Secretary here, still delays his arrival, and may probably not come till July ; but I have resolved, let the struggle cost what it may, and even at the forfeiture of Sir

A. Ball's good will, to return home at the latter end of May. I have the Title and the Palace of the Public Secretary, but not half the Salary tho' I had a Promise of the whole. But the promises of one in office are what every one knows them to be, and Sir A. B. behaves to me with really personal fondness, and with almost fatherly attention. I am one of his Family, whenever my Health permits me to leave my own House. My dear Stuart! I thank you for the Couriers; they have (such as have arrived) amused me greatly, and indeed instructed me. For a long long space of Time I have received no Letters from you. Indeed, greatly as I am delighted by any proof of your remembering me, I have no need of them as remembrances of you; for I know that till I die, or at least until my Reason and Memory die, I shall always feel all your kindness to me, and be with firm and grateful attachment,

Your affectionate Friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 152

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Keswick, Cumberland, England.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published in part, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

*Treasury House, Malta,
August 21, 1805.*

MY DEAR SARA

Having written to you at full by the June Frigate tho' from its not being absolutely certain that she will touch directly at Gibraltar I did not choose to enclose the second bill of exchange,¹ I now write merely as an envelope for that bill, by Colonel Smith who goes today to Naples, from thence overland to England, with dispatches. I had flattered myself that I should have gone with him: as indeed I have been flattering myself every week for the last six months that I should have permission and opportunity to go,

¹ This refers to a bill of exchange for £110 which Coleridge was sending home.

but Sir Alexander has still contrived, in one way or another to prevent it. Now however he has given me his solemn promise that as soon as I have written six public letters, and examined into the Law-forms of the Island which cannot take me more than a week altogether, he will forward me immediately to Naples and will use his best interest with Mr. Elliot our Ambassador at Naples, to send me home with dispatches—which of course, would *frank* me home.¹ As this however is an uncertainty I am obliged to retain about £120 by me, but whatever money I am obliged to spend in travelling over land, will be amply repayed to me by the booksellers. It has injured my health very considerably, this continued disappointment both in my return, and in my letters—and this well-grounded suspicion, that the letters sent by me have not been more fortunate than those sent from England to me. The weather has been dreadfully hot for the last month—sometimes as high as 95° Fahrenheit, seldom lower than 85— It has brought out boils and prickly heat on my body, and seriously annoyed me. On the 27th of July last an earthquake took place in the kingdom of Naples which destroyed three towns and about 8000 people in A. [?] and so shook the city of Naples that the calculated damage is 20 per cent on the whole value of the city, about eight million ducats. Scarce a single house remains uncracked. The Commissioner entered one house to examine it the next morning; the master of the family answered that it had received a little crack in the ceiling; but would last as long as their time. The Commissioner examined it and ordered the family out of the house, that instant, and in 16 minutes the whole fell in—

We had about a month before a smart earthquake in Malta, which shook my bed and me in it as with a Giant's Arm, but it did no mischief. Ships 60 leagues distant from

¹ Sir Alexander Ball did write to His Excellency H. Elliot (Minister at the Court of Naples) "strongly recommending Coleridge to his favourable notice and consideration . . . but the Minister whose hands must have been pretty full at the time, failed to be impressed, and withheld his patronage." *Letters*, ii. 508 n. Coleridge was not "franked home" but paid for his passage in an American vessel,

land felt it, and it appeared as if they had suddenly struck on a rough shore, and were *raking* the sands.

Sir Alexander Ball's kindness and confidence in me is unlimited. He told a gentleman a few days ago, that were he a man of fortune, he would gladly give me £500 a year to dine with him twice a week for the mere advantage which he received from my conversation—and for a long time he has been offering me different places to induce me to return—he would give me a handsome home, garden, country house and £600 a year certain. I thank him cordially, but neither accept nor refuse. I had lately a fine opening in America which I was much inclined to accept but my knowledge of Wordsworth's aversion to America stood in my way.

My health is by no means what I could wish—the quantity and variety of my public business confine me and I cannot take enough exercise—and Malta, alas ! it is a barren rock—the sky, the sea, the Bay, the Buildings are all beautiful—but no river, no brooks, no hedges, no green fields, almost no trees, and the few that are are unlovely. It might have been better for me if I had remained wholly independent—for the living in a huge Palace all to myself like a mouse in a Cathedral—on a fair or market day and the being hail'd most illustrious Lord the Public Secretary are no pleasures to me who have no ambition, and having no curiosity the deal I see of men and things only tends to tinge my mind with melancholy—However I trust that the first of September will be the latest time I shall stay here— Of all tender recollections I have spoken in my last—and do not wonder if with people about me craving dispatch of business I cannot bring myself to write down names that make my inmost heart as often bleed tears, as dissolve with tenderness—All whom I loved in England I seem to love tenfold in Malta—My dear Sara, may God bless you—be assured, I shall never cease to do everything that can make you happy—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 153

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology* Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

Wednesday, August 20, 1806.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY

I write to you rather than to Mrs. Coleridge because I can write more tranquilly—indeed it agitates me so much that if I could have settled any rational plan to have set off tomorrow or tonight I should not have written at all—but have let the information sent to Grasmere suffice. After as sore a heartwasting as I believe ever poor creature underwent, and which commenced at and continued without interval from April, 1806, I landed at lower Haslow, Halling, in Kent¹ on Sunday afternoon last—a few hundred yards from a curious little chapel, which being open and no one in it I hurried to—and offered, I trust, as deep a prayer as ever without words or thoughts was sent up by a human Being. Very very ill I was at my setting off from Leghorn—not one meal in ten, little as I eat, could I retain on my stomach—and we had 55 days aboard ship, and what I suffered even to the last day, may the worst of men only ever feel. Had not the Captain loved me as he often said better than a brother, and performed all the offices of a nurse I could not have survived

.²
I detail these shocking circumstances to you and my wife, in order that you may feel part of the gratitude which I am ever to do. Tho' as proud and jealous an American as ever even America produced, he would come and even with tears in his eyes beg and pray me to have an enema, and strange it is ! but tho' the pain is so trifling that it is almost a misnomer to

¹ Coleridge returned to England (after three months in Italy where he made the acquaintance of Washington Allston, Tieck, and others) on board the *Gosport*, under the command of an American, Captain Derkheim. See *Life*, 150-151, for further details of his experiences.

² The passage herein omitted deals with Coleridge's illness at sea, and details his intestinal complaint.

call it pain, yet my dread of and antipathy increased each time. However, almost immediately after my landing health seemed to flow in upon me, like the mountain waters upon the dry stones of a vale-stream after rains. And I can safely say that for 16 months I have never enjoyed four *days* of such health as I have had since Sunday afternoon and my nights have been unusually good. My body is quite open, and tho' I do not respire freely, yet I respire with comparative ease. One night indeed I was awakened with the old *knock* of the head, and was very bad indeed for three hours, but I attribute this to a little imprudence in drinking off, from thirst I did not perceive it, some stale beer instead of porter, and its long continuance was entirely to my being without assistance, without hot water, or ether, or indeed anything but the water in the wash basin. With great care, meat, potatoes, porter, and dissolved meat once an hour so as always to keep off faintness, I shall do. But whether it does, I live or die at home. I am now going to Lamb's. Stuart is at Margate—all are out of town. I have no one to advise me. I am shirtless and almost penniless—but money I can get immediately. My MSS. are all, excepting two pocket-books—either in the sea, or (as in the case of the 1⁰ths) carried back to Malta. I will try to write again before night. I will come as soon as I can come—

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 154

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Monday Afternoon, September 29, 1806.

MY DEAR SARA

I am fretted almost out of all patience. But that we are to meet so soon, I would detail to you my disappointments, in calling on Lord Howick and the circumstances which have almost compelled me not to abandon the attempt, tho' it was always against my inclinations, and tho' I never

expected anything from it.¹ As to Sinecure Places or Pensions, they are out of the question, for any but noblemen's sons, or the relations of men with great parliamentary interest—and as to active secretaryships, and all those situations which imply the continual subjection of one's own intellect to the views and purposes of *another*, I know them too well already—and 500 or even 1000*£* a year would be a poor compensation. However I had made up my mind that I had done all that Mr. Smith² could expect of me; and had prepared everything for departure, when another accursed rub has intervened—the American Captain with unaccountable delay and breach of promise has not sent my books and MSS. with other trifles—and if I go out of town without them, I am almost sure to lose them which would be absolutely irreparable.

Be assured, that to leave London is the strongest wish of which a mind and body so enfeebled as mine is capable—I entreat you not to be depressed or agitated by delays, which I cannot avoid.³ Indeed, it has so much deranged my health and disquieted my sleep, that—unless I am to come to you with sick stomach and swollen limbs I must stay on the road. I intend therefore to go to Parndon tomorrow morning, to stay there one day: from thence to go to Cambridge,

¹ Coleridge "had been sent for by Lord Howick [Foreign Secretary], but had been repulsed by the hall porter, and doubted whether the letter on the state of affairs in the Mediterranean which he had left had ever reached his Lordship." *Life*, 154.

² "William Smith, M.P. for Norwich, who lived at Parndon House, near Harlow, in Essex. It was in a great measure through his advice and interest that Coleridge obtained his Lectureship at the Royal Institution." *Letters*, ii. 506 n.

³ Coleridge was indeed a long time returning to Keswick, after his arrival from Malta. J. Dykes Campbell quotes from an undated letter (see *Life*, 154-155) from Wordsworth to Sir George Beaumont, in which he says that "Coleridge dare not go home, he recoils so much from the thought of domesticating with Mrs. Coleridge . . ." The tone of Coleridge's letters to his wife during this period and the fact that he had perfectly legitimate reasons for his delay (his efforts to recover his MSS., and to arrange a course of lectures, etc.) lead me to question Campbell's conclusion. Probably Campbell was not correct in assuming that the undated Wordsworth letter was written in 1806. Wm. Knight dated it 1811. See *Memorials of Coleorton*, 1887, ii. 123.

and from thence to the great North Road—and to contrive matters so that I may not have to sit up more than one night in the coach. I cannot express to you, what a dreadful damp your account of the Children's ages threw on my spirits. I could scarcely breathe for more than an hour after. But may the Almighty look down on them, and make their years a blessing to them. I love them so, that I retire back from the sense of the exceeding love, I bear them, like a coward. I seem to myself too weak to bear the burthen of my own heart. But let me hope that the evils of life are passing off—and that I shall have blue sky in among the morning clouds.

I should have called on George to-day ; but it has rained incessantly, and I am not quite as well even as usual. I hear a very good account of him. I would to God I could tell you positively the day when I shall be at Keswick. Be assured nothing will detain me even an hour short of ill-consequences that would cast a gloom over my arrival. For however declining I may feel myself *within*, I very much wish to present an outward appearance of health and strength.

I visit nobody in London but C. and M. Lamb—and have not been to one public place.

Let me entreat you, my dear Wife—again and again not to fret yourself at these delays more than you can help. If the books were not absolutely necessary to me, I should leave the business to C. Lamb altho' I could not even then do it with prudence, for Charles is a very bad negociator, and an impatient commissary. My grateful love to Southey and kind remembrances to Mr. Jackson and Mrs. Wilson—O my dear Hartley !—affectionately your husband

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 155

To CAPTAIN DERKHEIM, of the *American Ship Gosport, Deal.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

340 *Strand, London.*

Sept. 30, 1806.

DEAR SIR

I am so much affected by your setting sail without leaving either my books, or a single line to direct me concerning the trunk that was put in Quarantine, that it is with a heart of anguish that I attempt to congratulate you on your marriage, tho' I most sincerely wish you all happiness. Indeed grievous as the loss of the books is to me—of books that can be neither useful nor amusing to you—and tho' this loss will entirely deprive me of the power of giving my intended Lectures, to the Loss of £150 at least—yet still I seem to suffer more than all from the perplexed and distracted state of mind, into which I have been thrown. When I recall your kindness to me on board the *Gosport* and your constant promises, and then again think of my urgent and almost *begging* letters to you, and that you never could take the trouble even of letting me know definitely where my books and other little things were—my heart sinks within me ! I cannot bear to express indignation, lest I should accuse myself as ungrateful—I cannot bear to think of my gratitude, lest I should rouse up a sense of your cruelty.

I have little hope that this will find you—or that, if it does, you will give me an answer—yet I conjure you by your own peace of mind to write me one line just to let me know where the trunk is, and where the loose books—anything else—as the attar of roses you are welcome to—but these can be of no use to you, and are invaluable to me. I called by advice of the good woman of the Coffee House on Mr. Busher of 7 Catherine St., did not see him but saw his wife—who seemed to enjoy my loss as a *good thing*. I cannot but persuade myself that you have left them somewhere or other for me. I shall therefore call with Mr. Sharp or some other merchant of character—on Mr. Le Mesurier or Anderson to make enquiry.

However it be, I wish nevertheless that Heaven may protect you, and that those of whom you think highly and affectionately, may never treat you with neglect and injury.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 156

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

[October 2, 1806.]

MY DEAR LOVE

I have been sitting in a thorough mope for the whole day, not knowing what to do ; and every now and then resolving that I would go and seek a place in the Mail for to-night, spite of all that prudence on the state of my health could suggest to the contrary. The idea of so frequently disappointing you harasses me insufferably. But alas ! I have a doleful tale to relate. I have acquainted you with what tenderness Captn. Derkheim treated me during my long voyage from Leghorn, and that I have reason to believe that I owe my life to him ; when I quitted his ship at Stangate Creek, with a prejudice against smuggling almost peculiar to Americans and arising out of the happy state of a new country under a republican Government he persuaded me not to take my loose Books, some 40 volumes, nor my trunk of books and other valuables, on shore with me, which by connivance of the Customhouse Officers, whom we had bribed, I could easily have done—as my companions actually did ; without the slightest difficulty. These of course were to be first quarantined, and then sent to the Custom-house. The Captain repeatedly entreated me not to take the least concern—that it was altogether unsuited to my exceeding weakness, both of body and spirits—that he would do the whole—the loose books he would himself bring out of the ship, by fours and fives at a time, and that he would see me every day—and as soon as the Trunk could be got out of the Custom House, he would get it, settle for it, and send it to

the Courier Office—Among my scanty property there were about a dozen pieces of Roman Pearls—each sufficient for two large double necklaces and a pair of Bracelets and 5 bottles of Ottar of White Roses, which were presented to me by the Minister of the Dey of Tunis as a mark of acknowledgement for my having pleaded for the Dey in the Court of Admiralty at Malta. These of course I had designed for you—not indeed for your own use—but that you might make little presents of them ; especially, I meant you to have sent all the Ottar of Roses—except one bottle to Lady Beaumont for the Ottar of *White* Roses is more than tenfold the value of the other, dear and scarce as both are, when genuine, and indeed is not to get once in 20 years in this country. However, observing that the Captn. often admired the Roman Pearls, and being wholly penniless, I thought, that my shewing myself grateful to a man, who had preserved my Life, would give you more pleasure, than the giving away the Pearls yourself—I therefore begged him to accept of them—but reserved the Ottar of Roses, which (I know) he got out of the ship. It irks me to tell you the sequel ; instead of calling on me, every day, he only dined with me once—I was always fagging after him in vain, and have written no less than four letters of almost passionate entreaty, for my *books* as I could not give my lectures without them—I received two strange evasive answers—the last acknowledging but excusing his neglect by the fact that he had been courting a Lady and was married—but all things he would settle with me, face to face—I waited three or four days, anxiously expecting to see him. At length, overborne with anxiety and suspense, I went after him on Tuesday—and lo ! he had *sailed* on the Sunday morning, without leaving a Line for me, or speaking a word concerning my property to his wife or wife's relations. I sent a Letter to him inclosed by Mr. Street in one to his correspondent at Deal—the Cor. found that the ship had passed that very morning with a fair wind, but after met his wife who knew nothing of the business, and only said—Good God ! Mr. Coleridge is an intimate friend of Captain Derkheim's. The loss is very serious to me in many respects and

I can only explain it by supposing that he had given away the Ottar of Roses to his mistress and was ashamed to see me afterwards. I have only one chance, that of searching the Custom House for my Books but I am wholly unable to do it myself, and can find no friend to do it for me. Likewise more than half my cloathes are at Parndon, so that I have not now even a clean shirt, what can I do, my Love? Be assured, nothing you can suffer is one 4th of what I suffer in consequence of this delay. I will write again tomorrow—

God bless you, my dear Love, and your Husband—

S. T. C.

The anxiety, fatigue, walking in wet shoes to Tower Hill and back, and above all the shocking struggle between Indignation and gratitude proved too much for me, and I was obliged to keep my bed till yester evening, and am still a bewildered man.

LETTER 157

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Friday afternoon, October 3, 1806.

MY DEAR LOVE

Tho' the state of my health in addition to the unfortunate, indeed distressing accident which I detailed to you in my letter of yesterday, must I am sure appear to you not merely justifying, but even necessitating causes of mine and your disappointment, yet I am anxious that you should know the whole of my plans. Davy had been for many days urging me with an eagerness and importunity not common to him, to go with him to Mr. Bernard's ¹ at Roehampton, as today. This I had firmly refused, stating the impropriety of so frequently vexing and disappointing you—and my own eagerness to be with you and my children. Since however I have been absolutely prevented from going off at the time

¹ Sir Thomas Bernard (1750-1818) the philanthropist, was one of the founders of the Royal Institution.

proposed, as the business is really important—no less indeed than that of laying a plan of my giving Lectures every winter both at the Royal and London Institutions, and mainly assisting in a work which is to be published at the latter, from all which it seems probable that I make a respectable annuity of perhaps 400*£* a year. I at length consented—shall return on Sunday morning. On Monday I shall go certainly (if I can move wholly to Parndon, where I have left almost all my clothes, and having in respect to common politeness stayed one day), to Cambridge and from thence make the rest of my way to Keswick. Of course it is impossible to state the day or hour of my arrival; and I do trust, that it is not necessary for me to add that I will not make a minute's unnecessary delay. This shock both to my plans and feelings from the misconduct of the American has done my poor health serious injury—I still feel like a bewildered man. Tobin informed [me] two days ago that he had received (if I mistake not) a letter from dear Southey strongly disapproving of my scheme of giving Lectures.¹ I wish, he had written to me, and let me know his reasons. Something (he knows) I must do and that immediately, to get money—and this seems both the most respectable, and the least unconnected with my more serious literary plans which I should be glad to be less sceptical concerning—if Providence enable me to live long enough; and if I should die, as soon as I feel probable, it seems the most likely mode of distin-

¹ Wordsworth also seems to have disapproved of Coleridge's plan to lecture. Writing from Ashby de la Zouch near Coleorton, November 7th, 1806, he says:

“DEAREST COLERIDGE

... I write now to entreat that you would not on any account entangle yourself with any engagement to give Lectures in London, and to recommend your coming hither where you may sit down at leisure and look about you before you decide. You might bring Hartley with you and live here as long as you liked free of all expense but washing, you would be altogether uninterrupted and might proceed as rapidly as you liked with your Book of Travels, which would be certain of a great sale. Other things might be planned when we are together. Do write immediately.” (“This letter was discovered in 1890 in Vol. II. p. 271 of Hukon's Principles of Knowledge—where it must have remained since 1806.” Note by E. H. Coleridge).

guishing myself so as to leave patrons for you and my children.

But when I arrive, we can talk this over. A single course can do no harm—Stuart (who is indeed and in deed a kind and earnest friend to me) strongly and warmly—

The Coach !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 158

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Thursday, October 9, 1806.

MY DEAR SARA

Tho' still disappointed with regard to the portion of books, which I have happily recovered from my Loss, by their having been in a trunk containing property of Mr. Russell¹ and which trunk was marked with his name I am resolved to delay no longer—but to act by letter. I came from Parndon this morning in order to receive and send off by the waggon all I had recovered, and whatever was not immediately necessary to me—in this I have been *vexatiously* disappointed (for 2 or 3 of the books and a collection of prints from the Fresco Works of Raphael I shall want instantly)—however spite of it I am about to return to Parndon this same afternoon and tomorrow leave it with poor dear Mrs. Clarkson, whom I shall leave at Bury on Saturday—and thence take the very first stage to Ankenbury Hill, and thence to Keswick— My own health makes an interrupted journey almost necessary and common humanity of common friendship would find in Mrs. Clarkson's state a motive to go out of my road twenty miles. Her husband and child cannot go with her—and she so earnestly entreated me that I neither *could* nor *dared* refuse her. This continual off and on has injured my health, and almost drained my purse. I have at length agreed to lecture at the Royal Institution on the Prin-

¹ Mr. Russell was Coleridge's fellow traveller from Italy.

ciples common to the Fine Arts, and am to receive 120*l* for the course¹— I am in some hopes that (if not now) yet in another year I may be able to join on to this a Lectureship of more importance at the London Institution. The opportunity of giving Hartley opportunities of instruction, he would not otherwise have, weighs a great deal with me.

Your brother is a very good young man, and I am very much pleased with him indeed. He is not a whit the worse for his Methodism.

Our sweet Children ! God bless them and

Your faithful husband

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I ought to have seen Mr. Sharp but I cannot endure any more to disappoint you and myself—

Never forget to tell Southey, that I never suspend any affectionate remembrance of him, and that I enjoy his fair fame like a breeze on my own feverish forehead. Indeed, his reputation is so high as to deserve the name of fame. Malthus has just published an appendix in answer to his Review—he told Mrs. Smith, that he had attributed the Review to Mrs. Barbauld, but now found it was Mr. Southey. He praised the power of the Review but abominated its temper. Did I find any likeness in W. Scott's *Lay of the L. M. to Christabel* ?² I have not read the L. myself ; but at least half-a-dozen (among others Davy, Lamb, Mrs. Clarkson, Mrs. Smith) have mentioned it to me. I do not believe it—

¹ Coleridge apparently did not lecture at the Royal Institution until January, 1808. See *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism*, T. M. Raysor, 1930, ii. 3-4.

² For a full discussion of Scott's plagiarism of *Christabel*, see Letter 222, December 1811, and the footnotes.

LETTER 159

To GEORGE FRICKER, 4, *Castle Court, Bridge Row, Strand.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Thursday Afternoon,
October 9, 1806.

MY DEAR GEORGE

Mr. Russell's friend (a Mr. Austwick, who is a Clerk at Russell's Waggon Office at the Bull in Friday Street, Cheapside) had undertaken to get out the Trunk—and Mr. R. promised most positively, Monday afternoon, that it should be left here the next day, or Wednesday at the farthest—and lo ! it is not here. I wish, you would call on Mr. Austwick—there will be no money to pay, and giving my best compliments in a respectful manner (I mean, so as to imply my respect for him which he really deserves, as well as that which you always and of your own nature, pay to every man) entreat him to send it with all convenient speed by the *Kendal* Waggon to me, at Keswick : above all, not forgetting the engravings from Raphael, which, Mr. Russell promised to leave for me, as well as a list of his other things.

I fear you rather misunderstood one part of my letter¹—I by no means gave that extract as containing the whole of my Christian Faith ; but as comprising such doctrines as a clear Head and honest heart assisted by divine Grace might in part discover by self-examination and the light of natural conscience and which *efficiently* and *practically* believed would prepare the way for the *peculiar doctrine* of Christianity, namely salvation by the Cross of Christ. I meant these doctrines as the skeleton, to which the death and mediation of Christ with the supervention of the Holy Ghost were to add the Flesh and Blood, muscles, nerves and vitality. God of his goodness grant, that I may arrive at a more living faith in these last, than I now feel. What I now feel is only a very strong *presentiment* of their Truth and importance, aided by a thorough conviction of the hollowness of all other

¹ Coleridge apparently refers to his letter to George Fricker, which is printed in *Early Recollections*, . . . Joseph Cottle, 1837, ii. 116-119.

systems. Alas! my moral being is too untr tranquil, too deeply possessed by our lingering passion after an earthly good withheld, and probably withheld by divine goodness, from me, to be capable of being that, which its own "still small voice" tells me even in my dreams, that it ought to be, yet of itself cannot be. Indeed I am at times on the brink of obdurate despair, and am kept from it often by the wish of warning others— I hope to converse with you shortly, if God spare my Life.

I pray you, never talk of your obligations to me. Solemnly, I know of none. The Lambs are always happy to see you, and if you have indeed no other objection to visiting them often, besides that mentioned by you, *that*, my dear George, is alike unworthy of yourself, and of their kind and open nature. I am *never* ashamed to accept of that which (Circumstances reversed) I am conscious, I should find it my duty to give—your affectionate Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I leave Parndon (to which I now hasten) tomorrow and go by slow journeys to Keswick.

I have opened the letter to beg you on second thoughts, not to do anything unless you hear from me again.

LETTER 160

To THOMAS CLARKSON, *Plough Court, Lombard Street, London.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Mrs. M. M. Linnell. This remarkable document shows that as early as 1806, Coleridge had thought out pretty clearly his ideas of God, the Soul, Death, the distinction between the Reason and the Understanding, etc. Some of these ideas are worked out in the *Friend* in 1809; and they certainly form the nucleus of Coleridge's great theological work, *The Aids to Reflection*. Unfortunately in this letter the style is so complex and involved, that it is difficult, at times almost impossible, to follow Coleridge's reasoning.]

Bury, St. Edmunds,
Oct. 13, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR :

You have proposed to me questions not more awful than difficult of Solution. What metaphysically the Spirit of God *is*? What the Soul? What the difference between

the Reason, and the Understanding (*νοῦς καὶ ἐπιστήμη*, Vernunft, und Verstand) and how metaphysically we may explain St. Paul's assertion, that the Spirit of God bears witness to the Spirit of man? In the first place I must reduce the two first questions to the *form* of the 3rd and fourth. What the Spirit of God *is*, and what the Soul *is*, I dare not suppose myself capable of *conceiving*: according to my religious and philosophical creed they are *known* by those, to whom they are revealed, even (tho' in a higher and deeper degree) as color (blue for instance); or motion; or the difference between the Spirals of the Hop-plant and the Scarlet Bean. *Datur, non intelligitur*. They can only be explained by images, that themselves require the same explanation, as in the latter Instance, that the one turns to the right, the other to the Left, the one is with, the other against the Sun, i.e. by relative and dependent, not positive and fundamental, notions. The only reasonable form of question appears to me to be, under what connection of ideas we may conceive and express ourselves concerning them, as that there shall be no inconsistency to be detected in our definitions, and no falsehood felt during their enunciation, which might war with our internal sense of their actuality. And in this sense these definitions are not without their use—they remove the stumbling-block out of the way of honest Infidels, that we are either Enthusiasts or Fanatics, that is, that our faith is built wholly either on blind bodily feelings arising in ourselves or caught contagiously by sympathy with the agitation of a superstitious crowd around the Fanes. (*Fanatics*) And further, Seraphs and purified Spirits may burn unextinguishably in the pure elementary fire of direct knowledge, which has it's life and all the conditions of it's power in itself—but our Faith resembles sublunary Fire, that needs the Fuel of congruous, tho' perhaps perishable, notions to call it into actuality, and maintain it in clearness and the flame that rises heaven-ward, thus raising and glorifying the thick Vapor of our earthly Being. This premised, I venture—(most unfeignedly not without trembling and religious awe—to proceed in an attempt to answer your

first question : First then 1—What is the difference or distinction between THING and THOUGHT ? (or between those experiences of our nature, which in the unphilosophical jargon of Mr. Hume and his Followers, in *opposition* say rather, in direct contrariety, to the original and natural sense of the words, it is now fashionable to misname, IMPRESSIONS and IDEAS—) In other words, what do we mean by Reality ? —I answer—that there exist a class of notices which have all a ratio of vividness each with the other, so that tho' the one may be more vivid than the other, yet in the same and ordinary course of our nature, they are all alike contra-distinguishable to another class of notices, which are felt and conceived as dependent on the former, and to be to them the same sort as a stamp on paper, is to a seal sharp-cut in hand stone. The first class we call *Things* and *Realities* ; and find in them—not indeed absolutely, but in a sense which we all *understand*—(and I am not now disputing with a quibbler in mock-logic, but addressing myself to a Reasoner, who *seeks* to understand, and looks into himself for a sense, which my words may excite in him, not *to* my words for a sense, which they must against his own will *force* on him) we find, I say, in this first class a *permanency*, and *expectability* so great, as to be capable of being contra-distinguished both by these, and by their *vividness* to the second class, that is our Thoughts, which therefore as appearing posterior and faint we deem the Images and imperfect Shadows of the former. Language seems to mark this process of our minds. Res—Reor. So Thought is the participle of the Past : *Thing*, derived from the Participle present, or actuality in full and immediate action. Consequently, all *our* Thoughts are in the language of the old Logicians *inadequate* : i.e. no *thought*, which I have, of any *thing* comprizes the whole of that Thing. I have a distinct Thought of a Rose-Tree ; but what countless properties and goings-on of that plant are there, not included in my *Thought* of it ? But the Thoughts of God, in the strict nomenclature of Plato, are all *Ideas*, archetypal, and anterior to all but himself alone : therefore consummately *adequate* : and therefore according to our common habits of

conception and expression, incomparably more *real* than all things besides, and which do all depend on and proceed from them in some sort perhaps as our Thoughts from those *Things* ; but in a more philosophical language we dare with less hesitation to say, that they are more intensely *actual* ; inasmuch as the human understanding never took an higher or more honorable flight, than when it defined the Deity to be—*Actus purissimus sine potentialitate* : and Eternity, the incommunicable attribute, and may we not say, the Synonime of God, to be the simultaneous possession of all equally. These considerations, my dear Sir ! appear to me absolutely necessary, as pioneers, to cut a way thro' to the direct solution of your first Question—What is (i.e. What can we without detectable incongruity conceive of) the Spirit of God ? Answer—God's Thoughts are all consummately adequate Ideas, which are all incomparably more *real* than what we call *Things*. God is the sole self-comprehending Being, i.e. he has an Idea of himself, and that Idea is consummately adequate, and superlatively real—or as great men have said in the throes and strivings of deep and holy meditation, not only substantial or essential, but super-substantial, super-essential. This Idea therefore from all eternity co-existing with, and yet filiated, by the absolute Being (for as *our* purest Thoughts are *conceived*, so are God's not first conceived, but *begotten* : and thence is he verily and eminently *the Father*) is the same, as the Father in all things, but the impossible one, of self-origination. He is the substantial Image of God, in whom the Father beholds well-pleased his whole Being—and being substantial (*δμοούσιος*) he of divine and permanent will, and a necessity which is the absolute opposite of compulsion, as delightedly and with as intense *Love* contemplates the Father in the Father, and the Father in himself, and himself in the Father. But all the actions of the Deity are intensely real or substantial ; therefore the action of Love, by which the Father contemplates the Son, and the Son the Father, is equally real with the Father and the Son ; and proceeds co-eternally both from the Father and the Son—and neither of these

three *can* be conceived *apart*, nor *confusedly*—so that the Idea of God involves that of a Tri-unity ; and as that Unity or Indivisibility is the interest, and the Archetype, yea, the very substance and element of all other Unity and Union, so is that Distinction the most manifest, and indestructible of all distinctions—and Being, Intellect, and Action, which in their absoluteness are the Father, the Word, and the Spirit will and must for ever be and remain the “ genera generalissima ” of all knowledge. Unitarianism in it’s immediate intelligential (the Spirit of Love forbid, that I should say or think, in it’s intentional and actual) consequences, is Atheism or Spinozism—God becomes a mere power in darkness, even as Gravitation, and instead of a Moral Religion of practical Influence we shall have only a physical Theory to gratify ideal curiosity—no Sun, no Light with vivifying Warmth, but a cold and dull moonshine, or rather star-light which shews itself but shews nothing else—Hence too, the Heresy of the Greek Church in affirming, that the Holy Spirit proceeds only from the Father, renders the thrice sacred doctrine of the Tri-unity not only above, but against, Reason. Hence too, the doctrine of the Creation assumes it’s intelligibility—for the Deity in all it’s three distinctions being absolutely perfect, neither susceptible of additions—or diminution, the Father *in* his Son as the Image of himself surveying the Possibility of all things possible, and with that Love, which is the Spirit of holy Action (τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα as the air + motion = a wind) exerted that Love *in* that Intelligence, and that Intelligence *with* that Love (as nothing new could be effected on the divine Nature, in it’s whole Self) therefore in giving to all possible things contemplated in and thro’ the Son that degree of Reality, of which it’s Nature was susceptible. And this leads directly to your Second Question, namely—

2. What is (that is, what can we congruously conceive of) the Soul ?—

As the Father by and for the Word, and with and thro’ the Holy Spirit has given to all possible existences all susceptible perfection, it is in the highest degree probable that

all things, susceptible of Progression, are progressive ; and as Intelligence involves the notion of *order*, it follows necessarily, that as we can have no notion of desirable Progression (i.e. desirable for the Progressor, as well as for all others) but what supposes a growth of consciousness—or the image of that incommunicable attribute of self-comprehension, to which all creatures make approaches such as the Geometricians figure to us in the demonstration of Asymptotes. Now from those Possibilities, which exist only in the consciousness of others (and hence the absolutely inanimate is called by the Platonists, τὰ μὴ ὄντα) to the highest consciousness short of Deity there must subsist infinite orderly degrees—1. those who exist to themselves only in *moments*, and whose consciousness exists in higher minds. 2. those who are conscious of consciousness, but not only not of their whole consciousness, but who do not make that consciousness of a continuousness an object of secondary consciousness—i.e. who are not endued with reflex Faculties. 3. Those who tho' not conscious of the whole, of their continuousness, are yet both conscious of a continuousness—and make that the object of a reflex consciousness—and of this third Class the Species are infinite ; and the first or lowest, as far as we know, is Man, or the human Soul. For Reflexion seems the first approach to, and shadow of, the divine Permanency ; the first effect of divine working in us to find the Past and Future with the Present, and thereby to let in upon us some faint glimmering of that State in which Past, Present, and Future are co-adunated in the adorable I AM. But this state and growth of reflex consciousness (my Time will not permit me to supply all the Links ; but by a short meditation you will convince yourself) is not conceivable without the action of kindred souls on each other, i.e. the modification of each by each, and of each by the whole. A male and female Tyger is neither more or less whether you suppose them existing in their appropriate wilderness, or whether you suppose a thousand Pairs. But man is truly altered by the co-existence of other men ; his faculties cannot be developed in himself alone, and only by himself. Therefore

the human race not by a bold metaphor, but in a sublime reality, approach to and might become, one body whose Head is Christ (the Logos). Hence with a certain degree of satisfaction to my own mind I can define the human Soul to be that class of Being, as far as we are permitted to know, the first and lowest of that class, which is endued with a reflex consciousness of it's own continuousness, and the great end and purpose of all it's energies and sufferings is the growth of that reflex consciousness : that class of Being too, in which the Individual is capable of being itself contemplated as a Species of itself, namely, by it's conscious continuousness moving on in an unbroken Line, while at the same time the whole Species is capable of being regarded as one Individual. Now as the very idea of consciousness implies a recollection of the last Links, and the growth of it an extension of that retrospect, Immortality—or the recollection after the Sleep and Change (probably and by strict analogy the growth) of Death (for growth of body and the conditional causes of intellectual growth are found all to take place during Sleep, and Sleep is the Term repeatedly and as it were fondly used by the inspired Writers as the Exponent of Death, and without it the awful, and undoubtedly taught, Doctrine of the Resurrection has no possible meaning)—the very idea of such a consciousness, permit me to repeat, implies a recollection after the Sleep of Death of all material circumstances that were at least immediately previous to it. A spacious field here opens itself for moral reflection, both for Faith, and for Consolation, when we consider the growth of consciousness (and of what kind our's is, our *conscience* sufficiently reveals to us : for of what use or meaning could *Conscience* be to a Being, who in any state of it's Existence should become to itself utterly lost, and entirely new ?) as the end of our earthly Being—when we reflect too, how habits of Vice of all kinds tend to retard this growth, and how all our sufferings tend to extend and open it out, and how all our Virtues and virtuous and loving affections tend to bind it, and as it were to inclose the fleeting Retrospect as within a wall !—And again, what sublime motives to self-respect with humble

Hope does not the Idea give, that each Soul is a Species in itself ; and what Impulses to more than brotherly Love of our fellow-creatures, the Idea that all men form as it were, one Soul !—

Your third Question admits—in consequence of the preceding—of a briefer and more immediate Answer. What is the difference between the Reason, and the Understanding? I would reply, that that Faculty of the Soul which apprehends and retains the mere notices of Experience, as for instance that such an object has a triangular figure, that it is of such or such a magnitude, and of such and such a color, and consistency, with the anticipation of meeting the same under the same circumstances, in other words, all the mere *φαινόμενα* of our nature, we may call the Understanding. But all such notices, as are characterized by *Universality* and *Necessity*, as that every Triangle *must* in all places and at all times have it's two sides greater than it's third—and which are evidently not the effect of any Experience, but the condition of all Experience—that indeed without which Experience itself would be inconceivable, we may call Reason—and this class of knowledge was called by the Ancients *Νοούμενα* in distinction from the former, or *Φαινόμενα*. Reason is therefore most eminently the Revelation of an immortal soul, and it's best Synonime—it is the *forma formans*, which contains in itself the law of it's own conceptions. Nay it is highly probable, that the contemplation of essential Form as remaining the same thro' all varieties of color and magnitude and developement, as in the acorn even as in the Oak, first gave to the mind the ideas, by which it explained to itself those notices of it's Immortality revealed to it by it's conscience.

Your fourth Question appears to me to receive a full answer from the preceding Data. For if God with the Spirit of God created the Soul of Man as far as it was possible according to his own Likeness, and if he be an omnipresent Influence, it necessarily follows, that his action on the Soul of Man must awake in it a conscious[ness] of actions within itself analogous to the divine action ; and that there-

fore the Spirit of God truly bears witness to the Spirit of Man, even as vice versâ the awakened Spirit will bear witness to the Spirit of God. Suppose a dull impression from a Seal prefixed anew by that Seal—it's recovered characters bear witness to the Seal, even as the Seal had borne witness to the latent yet existing Impression.

Accept my thanks for your trouble about my Trunk ;¹ it was impossible for you to have done otherwise than you did, acting with your habitual kindness and avoidal of procrastination. Mrs. Clarkson bore her journey well ; and has continued remarkably well till this Day (i.e. Wednesday)²—This afternoon she has been in pain ; but I think it will be transient. I leave Bury tomorrow, God permitting—I need not say, I shall be glad to hear of and from you at Keswick : for I am with unfeigned Esteem your affectionate Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 161

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Published in part, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge at Malta, Modern Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 2 (Nov. 1929).]

Sunday Evening, November 30, 1806.

MY DEAREST BROTHER

As I indeed deserve much blame for my silence and general suspension of brotherly intercourse, so I suffer your gentle and therefore most painful reproof to sink into my heart unresisted, tho' the cause of my neglect and apparent lack of Love towards you is not only different to that which you attribute it, but the very opposite. It is not, my earliest and most honoured friend, that a wide range of intercourse with men has placed me above the need of those comforts which result from filial or fraternal intercommunion ; but that the same wretchedness of body and fluctuation of mind,

¹ This seems to be the conclusion to Coleridge's harassing difficulties in obtaining possession of his books, etc.

² Wednesday was on October 15 ; the letter is dated October 13, which was on Monday.

which sorely against my will dragged me from solitude, or, at least, the most confined society, and afterwards by accident and equally against my inclination whirled me about among many faces in many countries had placed me so far below those comforts that all the affections for which my nature seemed to have been *made*, became its crown of thorns, and I could find tranquillity, or a stupor that counterfeited tranquillity only as absolute abstraction—

For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient all I can ;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man,
This was my sole resource, my only plan :
And that which suits a part infects the whole
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.¹

The last letter which I wrote before the ship left Portsmouth Harbour for Malta was addressed to you. By neglect either of my Captain or his Portsmouth Boatman, it was not sent, and is still in my desk. In this letter I had stated [to] you my real state of mind, body and estate ; and, that not having gone, I was always planning another, but had never fortitude to set about it in good earnest. Shortly after my arrival in Malta, Sir A. Ball begged me to accept the offer of Private Secretary to him *nominally*, during the time of Mr. Chapman's absence, who was then on a corn-mission in the Black Sea, and would certainly not return in less than two months. This was not stated to be meant as a compliment to my general talents, and a return for a political memorial which I had written. [?] The salary, too, (it was stated) would pay the expenses [of] my intended Sicilian tour etc. My mind misgave me, but, at length, I accepted of the offer, and then removed to the Palace, and so far from finding it *nominal*, I had no small difficulty in realising my Sicilian project. However I did this in the fall of the year, and did not return to Malta till the close of it. Mr. Chapman was not yet returned, and Mr. Macaulay, the Public Secretary was perfectly *effete* and superannuated. For Sir A. Ball

¹ *Dejection : an Ode*, lines 87-93 ; *Poems*, 367.

personally I had a great affection and respect, indeed admiration, and he on the other hand had treated me with the most unbounded respect in public ; which I valued only for the motive, and with a fatherly tenderness and confidence in private. Always a facile thing, I could not resist his entreaties to take upon me the office, first of assistant, and, afterwards, at the death of Mr. Macaulay which took place in a few weeks, of Public Secretary, still looking forward with anxious hopes to the arrival of Mr. Chapman ; at all events I had determined to return to England in the spring. My object had failed—whatever benefit the climate of Malta had afforded, it was but a poor counterbalance to the utter dreariness of that white rock, the removal from all the pleasurable actions of my mind, of Books or Prospects or familiar faces, and the round of official splendour and official employment : things which were not meant for me. However April came but Mr. Chapman had not returned, and it was uncertain as ever when he *would*. Sir A. Ball entreated me not to leave him. I could not say *no* ! I did not say *yes* ! But I sullenly complied with him, and from that month lost all the little spirits and activity of mind, which I had hitherto retained. I will not tire you with the detail. Suffice that I was detained from month to month, till on my arrival in Sicily in November, meaning to pass from Messina to Trieste, and so thro' Germany to England (for a long sea-voyage I dreaded more than Death, and with abundant reason), I soon discovered that I had been detained too long : and that I must winter either in Sicily or Naples. By the inducement of Elliot, our minister at Naples, I was at length persuaded to go to Naples, discovered Elliot to be everything that Sir A. Ball was not and nothing that he was. I went from thence to Rome meaning to return to Naples and leaving almost all my little property, papers etc. in the care of Mr. Noble an English resident—before I had been in Rome a fortnight, the French Torrent poured down on that devoted country, the natural and necessary consequence of the mad and profligate, if not traitorous plans of our Minister. I still hoped to have made interest by means of the artists etc. to have been per-

mitted to go through Milanese into Germany, but it was impossible. Besides my finances were exhausted and my letters of credit I had left at Naples. Had I left Malta in the April I should have been in point of money, neither loser or gainer to any considerable amount—as it was, my employments have cost me at least £200, besides loss of time, and of that literary reputation, which to me is (my maker knows) [not more] desirable, than as it is a duty of gratitude in me to aim at it, and in the attainment of it might procure friends for my little ones after my decease, which I less than most men have any right to consider as a distant event.

From Rome by the friendship of young Russell I passed to Florence, just in time to escape an arrest from the French, and after a long delay at Florence and Pisa and Leghorn I at length embarked in an American vessel, and after 55 days of literal horror almost daily expecting and wishing to die, I at last trod again on my native land.

I will assuredly continue this letter tomorrow, as tonight's Post will not permit me to write further either of myself or of you. Of Edward ¹ I read with pain, but without surprize. For the last six or seven years, I have been more and more convinced, tho' I pretend not to *understand* much less *explain* the fact, that our *moral nature* is a power of itself, and not a mere modification of our common intellect, so that a man may have wit, prudence, sense, etc., etc. and yet be utterly destitute of a true moral sense— And when I observe the impotence of this moral sense, however highly possessed unassisted by something still higher, if I may so express myself, still more extra-natural, I own it seems to me as if the goodness of God had occasionally added it to our nature as an intermediate or connecting link between that nature and a state of Grace.

My love to William. I will write him soon. Till tomorrow farewell !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Edward Coleridge (1760-1843) had apparently left George Coleridge to conduct alone the school at Ottery. Coleridge himself later offered to assist his brother in the school, but the plan did not materialize. (See Letter 164, April 2, 1807.)

LETTER 162

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Since 1803 both the Coleridges and the Southey's had occupied Greta Hall. Apparently Coleridge's return from Malta led Southey to think of withdrawing from Keswick. In the end, however, the Southey's remained, Greta Hall being their home until Southey's death in 1843. Coleridge returned to Keswick at rare intervals until 1812; Mrs. Coleridge and Sara continued to share the house until after Sara's marriage in 1829. Southey must be given great credit for his cheerful assumption of responsibilities for his many in-laws.]

*Ashby-de-la-Zouch [Coleorton].*¹
[Early 1807.]

DEAR SOUTHEY

I am neither willing or able to believe but that my enquiries were tinged by the medium through which they were transmitted to you, and I entertain the same suspicion as to your answer. It is possible, that you might have mentioned to me your intention of leaving your Family at Keswick in case of your going to Lisbon, and that in my perplexed and absent state of mind I might have heard you as if I had not heard you, but I do not ever *recollect* your having once spoken to me concerning *any* of your plans, except the MSS. relative to Brazil, and most assuredly if you had, and I had not been absorbed or bewitched, I should have seized the opportunity, as an opening to do, what I so much wished, but found no encouragement from you to do—namely, to open my mind to you as to my friend and family connection concerning my own plans. I took it for granted even, that tho' you should not go to Lisbon, you yet were determined both from motives of climate and of literary convenience to settle near London or Bristol, as soon as your pecuniary circumstances rendered it convenient. This however I merely state in consequence of an angry sentence conveyed to me, as from you—and, indeed, I am persuaded, had you read my Letter (that which was cut off from Derwent's)

¹ On December 21, 1806, Coleridge with Hartley went to Coleorton to join the Wordsworths who were living in a house loaned them by the Beaumonts. Coleridge remained at Coleorton until early April, when after a brief visit in London, he joined his wife in Bristol.

I should not have had occasion to have written at all on the subject. I wrote to Mrs. Coleridge that I might gain the information I wanted without speaking to you at all, fearing lest from motives of delicacy you might have insisted on giving up the House to me, or have been wounded. I told Mrs. Coleridge that I could cheerfully wait a year, or so ; but that if you thought of staying longer, I gave up every idea of it with cheerfulness. It is not necessary that I should here speak of any better feeling as guiding me, than my own interest and convenience. For what in the world, at present, of external affairs could be more fortunate for me than your determination to live at Keswick indefinitely ? Thus respiting me for some years perhaps from the vexatious and difficult duty of seeking out a convenient abode for my little girl and her mother : and of course that person's comforts are of importance to my being left in some sort of tranquillity—even supposing that I did not for her own sake most ardently desire to see her as happy as is possible—consistently with her own after-welfare and independence and that of my children. In short, my whole object in writing to Mrs. C. what I wrote was, without application to you to know your plans, such as they were without any reference to me, and to guide my own as far as habitation is concerned by them. Be assured, that nothing can more alleviate the regret, I must ever feel at being constrained to abandon a place so very dear to me as my study and the country seen from its windows as the knowledge that you are still in the same house.

I was shocked, but not surprized, at Lord Granville's answer respecting the MSS. Good Heavens ! what would have been the answer of a French Cabinet ! and as if the sea-coast could be politically understood without an accurate knowledge of the interior—the force and resources, and dispositions of the inhabitants. Is Buenos Ayres no warning to them ? ¹ I will write to you on my own studies, as soon

¹ Coleridge refers to the abortive attempt made in 1807 to capture Buenos Ayres by the British, General Whitelocke being sent out by the Grenville Ministry.

as my mind is tolerably at ease. I am considerably better in health ; and as one proof of it, have written between 4 and 500 verses,¹ since I have been here ; besides, going on with my Travels.² I felt as a man revisited by a familiar spirit the first morning, that I felt that sort of stirring warmth about the Heart, which is with me the robe of incarnation of my genius, such as it is. God bless you—I am very sincerely yours

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 163

To DERWENT COLERIDGE, Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This beautiful letter is characteristic of Coleridge's tender love for his children and will refute the charge that he was an unloving or a careless father. For a study of Coleridge's relations to his children, especially Hartley Coleridge, see *Coleridge and His Son, Studies in Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 4 (October, 1930).]

*Ashby de la Zouch, Coleorton.
Saturday Night, Feb. 7, 1807.*

MY DEAR DERWENT

It will be many times the number of years, you have already lived, before you can know and feel thoroughly, how very much your dear Father wishes and longs to have you on his knees, and in his arms. Your Brother, Hartley, too whirls about, and wrings his hands at the thought of meeting you again : he counts the days and hours, and makes sums of arithmetic of the time, when he is again to play with you, and your sweet squirrel of a Sister. He dreams of you, and has more than once hugged me between sleeping and waking, fancying it to be you or Sara : and he talks of you before his eyes are fully open in the morning, and while he is closing them at night. And this is very right : for nothing can be more pleasing to God Almighty and to all good people, than that Brothers and Sisters should love each other, and try to

¹ Coleridge probably refers to a series of shorter poems (*Poems*, 401-412), the most important poem is *To William Wordsworth* (*Poems*, 403-408).

² Apparently another " projected " work !

make each other happy ; but it is impossible to be happy without being good, and the beginning and A.B.C. of goodness is to be dutiful and affectionate to their Parents ; to be obedient to them, when they are present, and to pray for them, [and to write] frequent letters from a thankful and loving heart when both or either of them chance to be absent. For you are a big Thought, and take up a great deal of room in your Father's Heart : and his eyes are often full of tears thro' his Love of you, and his Forehead wrinkled from the labor of his Brain, planning to make you good, and wise and happy. And your *Mother* has fed and clothed and taught you, day after day, all your life ; and has passed many sleepless nights, watching and lulling you, when you were sick and helpless ; and she gave *you* nourishment out of her own Breasts for so long a time, that the moon was at its least and its greatest sixteen times before you lived entirely on any other food, than what came out of her body, and she brought you into the world with shocking pains, and yet loved you the better for the Pains, which she suffered for you, and before you were born for eight months together every drop of blood in your body, first beat in *her* Pulses and throbbed in *her* Heart. So it must needs be a horridly wicked thing ever to forget, or wilfully to vex a Father or a Mother, especially a Mother. God is above all : and only good and dutiful children can say their Lord's Prayer, and say to God, "*our Father*," without being wicked even in their Prayers. But after God's name, the name of Mother is the sweetest and most holy. The next good thing and that without which you cannot either honor any person, or be esteemed by anyone, is *always to tell the truth*. For God gave you a Tongue to tell the Truth, and to tell a Lie with it is as silly, as to try to walk on your Head instead of your Feet ; besides it is such a base, hateful, and wicked thing, that when good men describe all wickedness put together in one wicked mind, they call it the Devil, which is Greek for a *malicious Liar* ; and the Bible names him a *Liar* from the beginning, and the Father of *Lies*. Never, never tell a Lie—even tho' you should escape a whipping by it ; for the pain

of a whipping does not last above a few minutes, and the Thought of having told a Lie would make you miserable for days—unless, indeed, you are hardened in wickedness and then you must be miserable for ever—

But you are a dear Boy, and will scorn such a vile thing : and whenever you happen to do anything amiss, which *will* happen now and then, you will say to yourself “ Well whatever comes of it, I will *tell the Truth*, both for its own sake, and because my dear Father [spoke] and wrote so to me about it.”

I am greatly delighted that you are so desirous to go on with your Greek ; and shall finish this letter with a short Lesson of Greek. But more cannot be done till we meet, when we will begin anew, and, I trust, not to leave off, till you are a good scholar. And now go, and give a loving kiss to your little sister and tell her, that Papa sent it to her ; and will give hundreds in a little time : for I am, my dear Child,

Your affectionate Father

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I find that I cannot write in this space what I wished—therefore I will send you, my dear child ! a whole sheet of Greek Lessons in a few days. In the mean time learn your articles, \acute{o} , $\acute{\eta}$, $\tau\acute{o}$ and the pronoun relative, $\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\acute{\eta}$, \acute{o} and then write out \acute{o} *τελώνης*, putting the English to each case with “ of ” before the Dependent and “ to ” before the motive, (you need not write out the Dual Numbers). Then write out *Μοῦσα* ; then *τίμη*, then \acute{o} *λόγος*, and $\tau\acute{o}$ *ζῶον*. After this *read over* the verb substantive *εἶμι* and all *τύπτω*—putting the English to each—thus *τυπτῶ* I beat, *τυπτεῖς* thou beatest ; *τύπτει* he beateth, *τύπτομεν* we beat, *τύπτετε* you beat, *τύπτουσι* they beat—*ἔτυπτον* I was beating, *ἔτυψα* and *ἔτυπον* (Indefinite 1st and 2nd have the same meaning, and so has the 1st and 2nd Future) I beat or did beat etc. *τέτυφα*, I have beaten etc.—*ἔτετύφειν*, I had beaten ; *τύψω*, I will beat—and so on—declining each thro’ all the persons, both singular and plural. And then I will send you Lessons, made up of those words put in different cases and tenses, so

as to make sense, and to teach you the use and meaning of these various endings— May God bless you, my darling !
Your dear friend, Sara Hutchinson sends her love to you !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 164

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

April 2, 1807.

MY DEAR BROTHER

The omniscience of the supreme Being has always appeared to me among the most tremendous thoughts of which an imperfect rational Being is capable ; and to the very best of men one of the most awful attributes of God is the Searcher of Hearts. As he knows us we are not capable of knowing Him ourselves. It is not impossible that this perfect (as far as in a creature can be) self-knowledge may be among the spiritual punishments of the abandoned, as among the joys of the redeemed Spirits. Yet there are occasions, when it would be both a comfort and advantage to us, if with regard to a particular conduct and the feelings and impulses connected with it, we could make known to another, and with the same degree of vividness, the state of our own hearts, even as it exists in our own consciousness. Sure am I, at least, that I should rejoice if without the pain and struggles of communication (pain referent not to any delicacy or self-reproach of my own) there could be conveyed to you a fair abstract of all that has passed within me, concerning yourself and Ottery, and the place of my future residence, and the nature of my future employments (all more or less connected with you) but after I have been with you awhile, in proportion as I gain your confidence and confident esteem, so I shall be able to pour my whole heart into yours. I leave this place (a seat of Sir G. Beaumont's) on Saturday, April 4th, and proceed to Bristol, where I am to meet Mrs. Coleridge and the two children (for Hartley is with me) and immediately proceed to Ottery. If you find reason to believe that I should be an assistance or comfort to you by

settling there, in any connection with you, I am prepared to strike root in my native place : and you know the depths of the friendship I have now for ten years (without the least fluctuation amid the tenderest and yet always respectful intimacy) felt toward and enjoyed from Mr. W. Wordsworth, as well as the mutual love between me and his immediate household, [and] you would not think the less of my affection, and sense of duty towards you my paternal Brother, when I confess that the resolution to settle myself at so great a distance from him, has occasioned one among the two or three *very severe* struggles of my life. Previously, however, to my meeting you, and at the time of thus communicating to you my resolve, provided it should be satisfactory to you, it is absolutely necessary that I should put you in possession of the true state of my domestic affairs—the agony which I feel on the very thought of the subject and the very attempt to write concerning it, has been the principal cause not only of the infrequency and omission of my correspondence with you, but of the distraction of all settled pursuits hitherto.

In short with many excellent qualities of strict modesty, attention to her children and economy Mrs. Coleridge has a temper and general tone of feeling, which after a long and for six years (at least) a patient trial I have found wholly incompatible with even an endurable life, and such as to preclude all chance of my ever developing the talents, which my Maker has entrusted to me or of applying the acquirements which I have been making one after the other, because I could not be doing nothing, and was too sick at least to exert myself in drawing from the sources of my own mind to any perseverance in any regular plan. The few friends who have been witnesses of my domestic life, have long advised separation, as the necessary condition of everything desirable for me. Nor does Mrs. Coleridge herself state or pretend to any objection on the score of attachment to me. That it will not look *respectable* for her, is the sum into which all her objections resolve themselves. At length, however, it is settled (indeed the state of my health, joined with that of my circumstances, and the duty of providing what I can for my

three children, would of themselves dictate the measure, tho' we were only indifferent to each other), but Mrs. Coleridge wishes, and very naturally to accompany me into Devonshire that our separation may appear free from all shadow of suspicion of any other cause than that of unfitness and unconquerable difference of temper.¹

O that those who have been witnesses of the truth, could but add for me that commentary on my last words, which my very respect for Mrs. Coleridge's many estimable qualities would make it little less than torture for me to attempt. However, we part as Friends. The boys, of course, will be with me. What more need be said I shall have an opportunity of saying when we meet together. If you wish to write to me before my arrival, my address will be Mr. Wade's, Agg's Printing Office, St. Augustine's Place, Bristol.

Make my apologies to my dear nephews and assure them that it will be a great joy to me to endeavour to compensate

¹ This brings to a climax Coleridge's long domestic difficulty. From the beginning there had been little happiness in the marriage. On Oct. 21, 1801 (Letter 88) Coleridge wrote to Southey of his plan to separate from Mrs. Coleridge unless they could adjust to each other; but in 1802, before the birth of Sara, Coleridge and his wife made desperate efforts to effect a reconciliation. (Letters 101, 102, 103, Oct. 20, Nov. 22, and Dec. 4, 1802.) But it would not do, and after a short stay at Keswick in the autumn of 1806 he determined formally to separate from his wife. No formal arrangement was made, however, and until 1812 Coleridge was often at Greta Hall. In September, 1811, Coleridge being unable to effect a separation, we find Mrs. Coleridge serving as his amanuensis! Cf. *Life*, 160 note.

George Coleridge was quite naturally shocked to learn the true state of Coleridge's domestic affairs; and he felt that if a separation were already definitely decided on, that Coleridge should carry it out in Bristol. Moreover, there was serious illness at Ottery and the addition of Coleridge and his family seemed inadvisable. I quote a few passages from George Coleridge's letter of April 6, 1807, to show that though deeply agitated, he wrote in a kindly spirit:

"Your letter has necessarily added to a load of distress under which I am at present labouring. . . . We have now ten patients in bed, one in a very dangerous state and two others proceeding towards it. Mrs. Luke Coleridge who has filled her house with the surplus of my family, has likewise some boys sick in her house, and our poor aged Mother is with difficulty conveyed up and down stairs and cannot, of course, be at this frail period of her existence incommoded. I mention these particulars to prove to you how impossible and how imprudent on all accounts it would be for you to come at present to Ottery with any of

for my epistolary neglect by my conversation with them, and that any valuable knowledge which it should be in my power to communicate to them, will on their account become more valuable to me. My Love and my Duty to all who have to claim it from me.

I am, my dear Brother,

With grateful affectionate esteem

Your friend and brother

S. T. COLERIDGE.

your Family. . . . Let me therefore recommend you as sober a plan as my confused mind can suggest. As you are going to Bristol, and determined to separate from your wife (a step which, in my opinion, no argument in your situation can justify) make your arrangements there among her Friends. To come to Ottery for such a purpose would be to create a fresh expence for yourself, and to load my feelings with what I could not bear without endangering my life. I pray you, therefore, do not do so : I should think that your wife the natural mother of your children should keep them at your expence, until you can send them out from home. The eldest might go to Christ's Hospital, and the youngest follow him in this or some such situation, to procure which your friends or ours might exert themselves. For it is necessary for me now to tell you that I have made my final arrangements for giving up school, and have just taken the gentleman who is to be my successor as soon as I can arrange with the parents of the children. . . . Whatever I can spare you in the pecuniary way for putting out your children, or making you more comfortable shall be at your service, but peace of mind, if it is to be found here below I must have. Resolve, therefore, wisely. . . . I know scarcely what I have written—my mind is so agitated from within and without. . . . For God's sake strive to put on some fortitude and do nothing rashly. Mr. Southey and Mr. Wordsworth ought surely to have had some weight with you that you might take no sudden step. . . . You might live apart for some time till you had better considered the nature of what you mean doing." (From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.)

LETTER 165

To WILLIAM SOTHEBY, *Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby. Coleridge apparently went to London before going to Bristol to join his wife and the two younger children. While in London he and Hartley stayed with the Basil Montagus.]

*Brown's Coffee House,
Mitre Court, Fleet Street,
Saturday Afternoon, 2 o'clock.
[Postmark, April 18, 1807.]*

MY DEAR SIR

When I tell you that I have but this moment left my bed, having been sleepless and in fever almost the whole of last night, I have made my apology to you. Yester afternoon I had my Hair cut—and too large a portion of my locks taken away—and I suppose, that my Health went the same way with Sampson's Strength. And unfortunately some of my inmost feelings were lacerated about the same time, and the fever within affected a function with the bodily Ague—at present, I am somewhat better.

I read yesterday in a large company, where W. Wordsworth was present, about 150 lines of your *Saul*,¹ respecting your country, Nelson, and the admirable transition to the main subject, which follows it—and it was delightful to me, to observe [how] the enthusiasm which had given animation and depth to my own tones, manifested itself with at least equal strength in the forces and voices of all the auditors. I have little or no doubt, that if you publish a second edition in a smaller size with some few alterations, you will have established your *Saul*, as the best epic poem in our language, the thread and transitions of which are woven *lyrically*: to which system, tho' it be not perhaps the best in itself, yet the character of David and of his age gives an especial propriety. In making my respectful compliments to Mrs. and Miss Sotheby you will convey the sincere feeling of

dear Sir,

Your obliged and I trust grateful

Friend and Servant

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ *Saul*; a poem in two parts was published in 1807.

LETTER 166

To DANIEL STUART.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 68-71 ; published in full *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1838.]

Friday night, May, 1807.

MY DEAR STUART

I am much affected at this moment by the reiterated proofs of your (in my experience, unexampled) kindness to me. But I should sink for ever in my own mind, if I did not deliver under my own hand to you, what I have not failed to declare to others, namely, that any services I may have performed for you, were greatly overpaid at the moment, and that the whole of the money I owe you, is *morally* as well as *nominally*, a true *debt*. Deeply indeed am I convinced that you always from personal kindness overrated the very little, which my own defects, and the Harass of domestic misery permitted me to do. If I were on my death-bed, I should say, that with regard to your paper what I did, must *certainly* have been of *little* Effect, and not improbably of *none*. The only connection that I feel with you, as arising from myself, is that I have had from the first a sincere affection for you, and that I have in my inmost [heart] a deep and honest respect for you, (*increased* by, no doubt, but) by no means *grounded* on my gratitude to you. I should be glad to believe, that there were two on earth as warmly and unmixedly attached to you. Excuse me, my dear Sir !—I know, this is oppressive to you ; but I felt it a duty, that I dared not resist, to declare under my own hand to *you*, what (I trust) I never have been, never shall be, backward in declaring to others, the true nature of your kindness to me, and of our connection in general. As to the money, I have a cheerful confidence that within the time I stated, I shall have repayed it ; but God in Heaven knows, I would never repay it, if I *could suspect* of myself, that the repayment would in the least degree lessen my sense of obligation to you. I beg, you will keep this Letter, and having requested that, I shall be silent on this subject for the future.

With regard to Wordsworth's affair,¹ I have in vain racked my recollection. I can *recollect* nothing—indeed even of our Tour I cannot recall a single Image or Conversation of the first week or more. I can only, therefore, *wonder*, how it could be *possible* for me receiving money from you, as I did, on my own account, to apply to you for 80*£* for Wordsworth, when he only wished and received 50*£*. It now dawns on my mind that you sent 80*£* on one account, but by what mistake (for I cannot, cannot degrade myself so far as to talk of *motive*) I could have commingled a debt of my own with Wordsworth's unknown to him or to you, is an absolute *Puzzle* to me. I even imagine, that I recollect that W. had 60*£* from the Tour, and that 20*£* were left for Grasmere concerns. But Dorothy, Mrs. Coleridge, and perhaps, your Letters (the greater number of which are extant) may clear it up. In itself, it is not of the least pecuniary consequence, at present, whether I owe it to Wordsworth, or W. to me ; but it will teach me a lesson worth more than twice 20*£*, never to receive or give money without taking a memorandum of it. As to yourself, there is not the dimmest probability, that you could be wrong—many causes of confusion might have place between me and Wordsworth, but no reason is assignable for you mistaking 80*£* for 60*£*. When I brought the draft, I had no *suspicion* of having any concern on my own account in the business : no more, than if you had desired me to take an 100 guineas, and pay 60*£* to Sir G. Beaumont : so blank and naked was my mind at the time—which I say, more as a *confession* than as a *justification*.

When your attention is open to it, in the course of 3 months, I shall avail myself of your opinion and advice as to my Play. If I had seen half as much of the Theatre, as you have, I should have confidence in my own opinion and I need not say therefore, that I have great confidence in yours. As to Mr. Sheridan, I should feel more for an indifferent person than for myself, and I grossly deceive myself, if *Self* has any

¹ Wordsworth seems to have borrowed *£*50 for his Scotch tour in 1803. I have been unable to disentangle this financial arrangement among Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Stuart.

share in my feelings. But to have desired a young man struggling for bread to write a Tragedy at 23—to have heard from him an unfeigned acknowledgment of his unfitness, to have encouraged him by promises of assistance and advice, to have received the Play with a letter submitting it *blankly* to his alterations, omissions, additions, as if it had been his own MSS., yet still expressing the Author's acknowledgment that it was not likely to suit the Stage, and that a repulse would create no disappointment, nay, that he would even consider himself as *amply rewarded* if only Mr. Sheridan would instruct him as to the reasons of its unsuitableness—then to utterly neglect this young man, to return no answer to his letter soliciting the remission of the Copy. (N.B. all this I had forgiven, and attributed to Mr. Sheridan's general character and complexity of anxious occupations)—but, *10 years afterwards*, to take advantage of a MSS. so procured, to make the author ridiculous, and that among those disposed to be his friends, and by a downright falsehood !¹ Suppose, my dear sir, this had happened to *you* or to Wordsworth ? It is the wanton cruelty of the Thing, that shocks me ; and for itself too : tho' few will give me credit for it.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ Sheridan had made Coleridge the object of ridicule by misquoting certain lines in *Orsorio*. Coleridge had written :

“ Drip ! drip ! drip ! in such a place as this

It has nothing else to do but drip ! drip ! drip ! ”

but Sheridan gave the lines as follows :

“ Drip ! drip ! drip !

There's nothing here but dripping.”

Coleridge in an effort to defend himself, insisted in the Preface to the first edition of the *Remorse*, that the line was

“ Drip ! drip ! a ceaseless sound of water drops ; ”

but he was mistaken.

LETTER 167

To WILLIAM SOTHEYBY, *Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheyby. This letter is undated, but on the authority of E. H. Coleridge, I have dated it May, 1807. It was sometime in May that Coleridge returned from London to Bristol to rejoin Mrs. Coleridge on their way to Ottery St. Mary. Presumably Coleridge had not received the letter from George Coleridge, dated April 6 (p. 371 n.); for he still intends going to Ottery. In writing to his Brother on April 2nd, Coleridge had asked that he be addressed at Mr. Wade's in Bristol, and probably George Coleridge's answer had not been forwarded to him. The visit never took place—nor did Coleridge ever visit his relatives at Ottery again.]

*Courier Office, 348 Strand.
Tuesday, [May, 1807.]*

MY DEAR SIR

It was my intention to have called on you yesterday morning; but was prevented by the necessity of attending Miss Hutchinson in her different concerns previous to my accompanying her to the Coach. She is gone to Mr. Clarkson's, Bury, and Mr. and Mrs. Wordsworth leave town tomorrow for Coleorton—and I and my child either tomorrow or the next day for Bristol in our way to Devon. In settling some money-matters between Mr. Stuart and Wordsworth I found myself indebted 30*£*, of which, either from defect of memory, or from absence of mind at the time. I have made a contract with Mr. Longman for 100 guineas to be paid me on the delivery of two volumes of poems—these are all ready, save only two—but these are the two that I cannot with propriety place anywhere but at the beginning of the first volume, and I wish of course to give a week's correction and thought to the others—two months however are the utmost (death and sickness out of the question) that will intervene between this and the completion of my Contract.¹ You kindly encouraged me to apply to you in any difficulty—and I therefore (tho' I cannot conceal that it distresses me a good deal) have taken courage to ask you, whether it would be convenient to you to advance me 50*£* for this length of time. I doubt not, I might get it from

¹ These volumes were never published.

Longman ; but I feel an insurmountable dislike to asking it, as he is a man for whom I have no other feeling than that of a selling Author to a purchasing Publisher. Yet should it be inconvenient, I assure you, I shall consider your telling me so frankly as a still greater proof of friendship, than your complying with my application.

For I am

unfeignedly, dear Sir,

Your friend with affectionate esteem

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 168

To WILLIAM SOTHEY, *Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby.]

May, 1807.

MY DEAR SIR

On Wednesday noon I wrote a Letter and left it with Miss Lamb to be instantly forwarded to you, of which the following is from the same copy : for I wrote the letter over again from finding the back of the sheet inked, with only a few verbal alterations.

MY DEAR SIR

I received your note with the draft late last night ; and immediately after breakfast this morning I sallied forth to thank you in person for this proof of your kindness.¹ But I had scarcely got into Bedford Street before I felt myself unwell ; and before I reached Holborn found myself under the necessity of calling a coach, and returning. I almost wish, that Davy had been with me—he would then have seen with his own eyes what the seizures were, on which Wordsworth and his family shortly after my arrival at Coleorton grounded and urged their advice and intreaties to me not to proceed to London ; but to abandon my plan of lecturing. They are short, thank Heaven ! and it is well, they are.

¹ This letter is no doubt an acknowledgment of a draft for £50 which Coleridge had solicited from Sotheby to pay Stuart ; see preceding letter.

Already by Miss Lamb's nursing I am sufficiently recovered—the disease having, as usual, precipitated itself per viscera. A glass of warm brandy and water, and a basin of strong broth are of more use than any medicines. But as I am obliged to transact some business for Wordsworth with Mr. Longman, and fear that this walk, short as it is, will be as much as I ought to risk, I must write to you, my dear Sir! the thanks, I cannot speak— On my arrival at Ottery you shall hear from me at full; and be assured, it will give me great pleasure to prove to you that irregularity in my former correspondence arose from no fault in the *man*, but in the circumstances. Under the impression of feelings honorable I trust, to you and to myself

I remain, my dear Sir,
with grateful and affectionate esteem
Your obliged Friend,
S. T. COLERIDGE.

This accident has vexed me—as I am to leave Town today—if possible I shall proceed to Lamb's to enquire about it. Be assured, my dear Sir! to be negligent in respect where I so strongly feel it, is no part of my nature. If it be possible, I will take my chance of seeing you before I leave Town.

LETTER 169

To JOSIAH WADE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Early Recollections*, ii. 130. Of the original letter only this fragment remains. It has neither salutation nor conclusion, and is undated; but as Cottle dates it 1807, and says it was addressed to Wade, and as the subject matter indicates that it was written in the summer of 1807, I think September, 1807, a safe conjecture. (See *Life*, 160 note.)]

[*Nether Stowey, September, 1807.*]

Poole (to whom I have not had courage to tell anything about you) sends his kind respects. In consequence of absence I did not hear of your request concerning the Poems till last night. Mrs. Coleridge's Letter only arrived here 3 or 4 days ago. I have sent them by the coach and they will arrive, I presume, at the same time with the letter.

O God ! if you knew the weight at my heart, the misery that cleaves to my spirits. The very day after my arrival at Stowey Mr. Poole was obliged to go away and be absent for a few days—on his return I was ill—and in getting over a high Hedge entangling my leg in a root just as I had taken the leap I sprained my ancle—which brought on not only a general fever, but every appearance of gout. In the mean time my kind Brother and his Wife, from whose pressing Invitations to Mrs. Coleridge to come down, with an implied promise that it should cost us nothing—in consequence of which and because it was Mrs. Coleridge's earnest desire, under the idea of giving herself and the children a sort of claim to their protection I had made the promise to her which I gave and performed with infinite regret ; this Brother, (by his wife to Mrs. C.) sent a cool formal Letter that we could not be received, the secret whereof is this : I had received at Coleorton a most affectionate Letter from this Brother (the only one of my family that I had any esteem or gratitude to) in which he spoke of himself as deserted by and distressed by the desertion of my Brother Edward with regard to his School—and dwelt on the hope and idea of my coming to him and being an aid and comfort to him in such affecting language that I was exceedingly moved—and being at that time very unhappy at Coleorton from causes, I cannot mention, after a thousand painful struggles I wrote to him to say, that I would come and should be happy to assist him for any number of months, that might be of service to his Health. But at the same time partly from the openness of my disposition, partly from W.'s advice that unless I disclosed my resolves of parting from Mrs. C. to my relations and our common friends, she would never give up the hope of making me retract, as I had so often done before, from pure weakness and partly, because my Brother's letter moved me so exceedingly, that I could not bear to come into his presence and bring my wife with me, with such a load of concealment on my heart—I told him my state, and my resolves, speaking in the highest terms of Mrs. C. and indeed referring to his councils when we met—as this subject was

so very, very painful, that I could only hint the outline in a Letter.¹ His pride and notion of character took the alarm and he made public to all my Brothers, and even to their children, this most confidential Letter, and so cruelly that while I was ignorant of all this Brewing, Colonel Coleridge's eldest Son (a mere youth) had informed Mr. King that *he* should not call on me (his Uncle) for that "*The Family*" had resolved not to receive me. These people are rioting in Wealth and without the least feeling add another 100£ to my already most embarrassed circumstances—indeed, an 100£ will not pay all our expenses to and fro— About the same time I received too much reason to suspect and fear, that I must not much longer expect the continuance of my annuity²—so that at the age of 35 I am to be penniless, resourceless, in heavy debt—my health and spirits absolutely broken down—and with scarce a friend in the world. In addition to all this, your Image has been an incessant Torture to me, I start at the sound of your name—not that under my then circumstances it was in my power to have done anything—for I was even unable to write a line to fulfil my engagement to Longman, altho' I was under engagements of honor to pay to one, who very much wants the money, the sum I was to have received³—nor have I in the world a single person, to whom I could apply for 20£ without an agony, that I

¹ Coleridge obviously exaggerated his grievance against his brother, and said, as he was wont to do under emotional stress, far more than he meant to say. Harassed by financial and domestic problems and probably taking opium in large quantities, Coleridge can be excused for his excessive bitterness.

² Coleridge had greatly disappointed Josiah Wedgwood by his failure to contribute material for the life of Tom Wedgwood which Mackintosh was supposed to be gathering. A humble letter of explanation (June 27, 1807, published in *A Group of Englishmen*, Eliza Meteyard, 1871, 324-328), however, roused the sympathy of Josiah Wedgwood, and a friendly intercourse was renewed.

³ Probably Coleridge refers to his indebtedness to Wordsworth. I have found no evidence that Coleridge ever repaid to Wordsworth the £100 borrowed before going to Malta (which Sotheby had loaned Wordsworth; see Letter 139, March 13, 1804), and as Coleridge was to receive £100 from Longman, he may refer to this long standing debt to Wordsworth.

should prefer suicide to—I found too, that my *being* known to have engaged regularly in a provincial Paper would accelerate and ensure (if any thing could) the abandonment of my hitherto Benefactor.

LETTER 170

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *Royal Institution, Albemarle St., London.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. Although this letter is published in part in *Letters*, ii. 514-516, E. H. Coleridge omitted such a large portion of it, that I have ventured to include the letter entire.]

[*Postmark, September 11, 1807.*]

MY DEAR SIR

Tho' it were contradiction in terms to pretend reasons for conduct confessedly most blameworthy, yet there may have been causes implying so severe a punishment already suffered by the offender, that little room for resentment can remain with a man of kind nature. This has long been my case; indeed bodily derangement, a general wretchedness accompanied with a want and seeming incapability of the feeling of Hope, had so abstracted me from almost every thing, considered as existing without, that even the knowledge of the loss of your regard and affection would rather have been a relief than an aggravation of what I have suffered within from the consciousness of meriting this and whatever else of the same kind had befallen me. Yet how very few are there whom I esteem, and (pardon me from this seeming deviation from the language of friendship) admire equally with yourself. It is indeed and has long been my settled persuasion, that of all men known to me I could not justly equal any one to you, combining in one view powers of Intellect, and the steady moral exertion of them, to the production of direct and indirect Good—and if I give you pain, my heart bears witness that I inflicted a greater on myself; nor should have written such words, if the chief feeling that mixed with and followed them had not been that of shame and self-reproach, for having profited neither by your

general example, nor your frequent and immediate incentives. Neither would I have oppressed you at all with this melancholy statement, but that for some days past I have found myself so much better in body and mind, as to cheer me at times with the thought, that this most unnatural and morbid weight is gradually lifting up, and my Will acquiring some degree of Strength and power of re-action. My bodily Health is certainly improved ; and tho' never wholly free from pain, and tho' sound sleep seems for years to have forsaken me, and I daily receive proofs of the weakness and irritability of my stomach and bowels—yet I am for hours together of the morning released from that load of overwhelming general sensations, that unutterable disgust thro' body and soul seeming to have myself and my very life for it's sole object—" whence Faintings, Swoonings of Despair, And Sense of Heaven's Desertion." For a length of time, that I cannot look back upon but thro' tears of anguish, I have not only not answered any letters—God help me, I have been afraid even to open them, even to look at their directions. For during this state so instant was the action of my mind upon my body, that within a few minutes after having read a painful letter my heart has begun beating with such violence, that not only it's motions were visible thro' my clothes, but I have literally felt pain as from blows within—and this has ended with an action on my bowels that both in the sort and place of the pain and in the nature and acrimony of the evacuation it bore no slight resemblance of a cholera morbus. I have however received such manifest benefit from horse exercise, a gradual abandonment of fermented and total abstinence from spirituous liquors, and by being alone with Poole and the renewal of old times, by wandering about among my dear old walks, of Quantock and Alfoxden, that I have seriously set about composition, with a view to ascertain whether I can conscientiously undertake what I so very much wish—a series of Lectures at the Royal Institution. I trust, I need not assure you how much I feel your kindness—and let me add, that I consider the application as an act of great and unmerited Condescension on the part of

the managers as may have consented to it.¹ After having discussed the subject with Poole, he entirely agrees with me, that the former plan suggested by me is invidious in itself, unless I disguised my real opinions, as far as I should deliver my sentiments respecting the *arts*, would require references and illustrations not suitable to a public Lecture Room ; and, finally, that I ought not to reckon upon spirits enough to seek about [for] books of Italian Prints, etc. And that after all the general and most philosophical Principles I might naturally introduce into lectures on a more confined Plan—namely, the Principles of Poetry conveyed and illustrated in a series of lectures. 1. On the genius and writings of Shakespere, relatively to his Predecessors and Contemporaries, so as to determine not only his merits and defects, and the proportion that each merit bears to the whole, but what of his merits and defects belong to his age, as being found in contemporaries of Genius, and what belonged to himself. 2. On Spenser, including the Metrical Romances, and Chaucer : tho' the character of the latter as a manner-painter, I shall have so far anticipated in distinguishing it from, and comparing it with, Shakespere. 3. Milton. 4. Dryden, and Pope, including the origin, and after history of poetry of witty logic. 5. On Modern Poetry, and it's characteristics—with no introduction of any particular names. In the course of these I shall have said, all I know, the whole result of many years' continued reflection on the subjects of Taste, Imagination, Fancy, Passion, the source of our pleasures in the fine arts, in the *antithetical* balance-loving nature of man, and the connection of such pleasures with moral excellence. The advantage of this plan to myself is—that I have all my materials ready, and can rapidly reduce them into form (for this is my solemn Determination—not to give a single Lecture till I have in fair writing at least one

¹ Davy had written to Poole, urging the latter to obtain from Coleridge an answer to a suggestion about lecturing at the Royal Institution. "The Managers of the Royal Institution are very anxious to engage him ; and I think he might be of material service to the public, and of benefit to his own mind, to say nothing of the benefit his purse might receive." *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, Mrs. Sandford, 1888, ii. 193.

half of the whole course) for as to trusting anything to immediate effort, I shrink from it as from guilt, and guilt in me it would be.

In short, I should have no objection at once to pledge myself to the immediate preparation of these lectures ; but that I am so surrounded by embarrassments. This is so painful a subject, that I never even hinted this objection to Poole—and certainly should not to you, if I could by any means have otherwise explained to you the cause of my irresolution. These have been in part, but only in a small degree, the result of my indisposition ; but for the greater part have been occasioned by a series of misfortunes, wholly out of my power to avert or foresee—I can prove to you, that what with actual losses in compelled expenditure, and what but for accident or ill-treatment would to a moral certainty been in my purse, I have lost little less than a thousand Pound—yet still I might have gone on (tho' Stoddart's cruel and almost inexplicable destruction of my books and papers,¹ without which I could not write the Results of my Residence abroad, except very imperfectly, and which I have been taught to expect weekly for a twelvemonth and now will have greatly lessened the value of the work—for what would have appeared almost prophetic, as some of my friends can witness from my then conversation, will now look like an artifice, or poetic ratiocination of the Past) yet still I could have gone on and gradually retrieved myself—(as if I live, I doubt not, I still shall do—my debts are of no amount, and all of them but about 40£ . . .² obligation and honor, to two or three friends) but for the most unfeeling conduct of my Brother towards me—who had in so pressing a manner urged Mrs. Coleridge to come down with her family ; promising that the expenses of the journey should be made up to us, that tho' sorely against my will I gave her a promise that I would take her and the children down—however having received a letter from my Brother George written in a spirit of

¹ Coleridge had apparently left certain of his books and MSS. with Dr. Stoddart at Malta. Stoddart seems to have withheld them indefinitely. See *Life*, 166 and *Letters*, ii. 523-524. ² MS. mutilated.

the warmest affection and most ardent desire to have me with him, for as long as I possibly could, if I would not consent to settle altogether there—I—in the fullness of my heart and indeed by the advice of a friend—confided to him—rather as a thing to be talked of between us two when Together than as an irrevocable resolve—the necessity, I felt, from the alarming state of my health, and the unfortunate and unhealable disparity of our dispositions, to live hereafter separate from Mrs. C—stating however my great esteem for her, that it would be done so as to create no apprehension in the world, as I should live within a walk of her, and that it really proceeded more from an anxiety to leave her independent than for my own sake etc., etc. To this letter I received an answer, *when we had arrived at Bristol*—full of reproach at my immoral intentions, of the disgrace to their family, of the unnaturalness etc., etc.—and refusing to see us. This journey had been sorely against my nature, and I had been so exclusively impelled by a sense of Duty and of awakening affection for my Brother, who had described himself as restricted by his school, and deserted by my Brother Edward strangely and unexpectedly, that I should have rejoiced at the circumstance relatively to myself, as releasing my conscience wholly from all connection with a family, to whom I am indebted only for misery—if the heavy expense of conveying myself, Mrs. Coleridge, and 3 Children, of her lodgings at Bristol, and all the et cetera of being absent from home, 4 or 5 hundred miles and the same to go back again, had not fallen upon me just at the very time, when I could only, without this instant pressure, have just brought the year to [sic]. Other and to me far crueller calamities, and more envenomed sting, had rendered me till very lately incapable of furnishing the two or 3 poems, which it was necessary to do previously to my collecting all my poetic scraps into two volumes—Indeed, I have determined to defer this publication, and immediately to proceed to my Travels¹ or rather information and recollections given and

¹ Coleridge seems to have postponed the publication of his two volumes of *Poems* (the contract for which he had apparently made with Longman,

suggested by them, as well as I can without waiting any longer. In the course of a month, if my Health continue even as it now is, I shall have written enough to tempt a bookseller to purchase the whole, and to go to Press without hazard—advancing on [sic] money proportionally ; and therefore, it is my present plan to accompany Mrs. C. northward as far as Liverpool (she is at present at Bristol—and it would be cruel indeed to let her go such a journey with so many children by herself) as soon as we can receive a letter from Mr. Jackson at Keswick, who has a few pounds of our money in his Hands, which with what Mrs. Coleridge now has, will with frugality carry us home—from Liverpool Mrs. C. can easily go without further protection to Keswick—and I mean to diverge to London so soon as to be there the last week of this month—

For God's sake enter into my true motive for this wearing Detail—it would torture me, if it had any other effect than to impress on you my desire and hope to accord with your plan, and my incapability of making any final promise till the end of this month.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 171

To MISS CRUIKSHANKS, *Enmore, near Bridgewater.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by J. Dykes Campbell. A few lines published, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, Mrs. Sandford, 1888, ii. 201. This letter is without salutation. It was originally attached to the MS. of the "Fragment of a Theological letter of Mr. Coleridge," printed in *Early Recollections*, i. 204-208.]

London,

September 21, 1807.

My whole and sincere opinion is this, that miracles are a condition and necessary accompaniment of the Christian Religion but not its specific and characteristic proof. They were not so even to the first eye-witnesses ; they cannot be

see Letter 167, dated Tuesday, May 1807), until he published his *Travels*, relative to the Malta experience ; but the *Travels* never appeared. They were probably " deferred " for the lectures !

so to us. I believe the miracles, because many other evidences have made me believe in Christ; and thus, no doubt, the faith in miracles does then re-act on its cause and fills up and confirms my faith in Christ. I had no suspicion that the book was a society book.¹ Mr. T. P. had repeatedly entreated me to write notes in his books and I had written such notes (especially in Stillingfleet's *Origines Sacrae*)² as precluded to him all possibility of misconception. I regret the accident; because I am aware that the words were not cautiously chosen, though I meant no more than to point out the false logic of the writer and then passed off to a general reflection, dismissing all immediate reference to the Resurrection; of the sensualising effects of building up Faith mainly in relation of miraculous effects of which I had seen with my own eyes so many degrading instances in Malta, Sicily, and Italy, and the withdrawing of the mind from examining its own nature, and the necessity of a *Redeemer*, and the correspondence of Christ's doctrines, manner of announcing them and of his whole character to that necessity, which must strike a morally predisposed Being almost like a sensation, and prepare the heart for that action of God's grace by which alone we can acquire a true and saving and entire faith in the Redeemer and a consequent Redemption.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 172

To an Unknown Correspondent.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This is one of Coleridge's kindest letters and indicative of his goodness of heart.]

348, *Strand*,
Friday Noon, December 18, 1807.

MY DEAR SIR

A most affecting instance of Distress has this moment been before my eyes—a woman, the widow of a once re-

¹ Coleridge had annotated a book belonging to the Stowey Book Society (thinking it was Poole's) and this letter is not merely an apology for his error, but an explanation of his notes.

² This work, with Coleridge's notes, is in the British Museum.

spectable citizen, Brewman, the printer and last proprietor, I believe, of a once celebrated paper, who was left 20 or 25 years ago, with a family of children—this woman was after this elected as a Nurse to one of the wards in Christ's Hospital, at the time that I was an upper boy there—and from her I received the greatest tenderness, a tenderness which God knows ! I had never received before, even from my own family. This poor woman from no other fault than that of too much good nature by an act of great severity was sacrificed to a Rule just then made, and sent away from her place—with not the least imputation on her moral character. Since then she has been struggling on thro' various scenes of distress—I first heard of her a few years ago—just before I went to Malta—and sent her such assistance as my own embarrassments permitted ; since then her distresses have come to a height of wretchedness, that I—living so much in the country—had no notion that Poverty could rise to. Of course, what I could do, I have done ; but a few pounds is gone in a week or so. But if I could exert influence enough to get her into one of the many alms' houses in or about London, I should not only be gratified on my own account ; but in a much higher degree happy, as in the removal of distress so very shocking— Having been the wife of a Citizen, and acquainted with most of the famous political writers at that time, she seems to have an additional claim too. If such a thing should be in your power, be assured, my dear Sir ! that I shall place it among my own especial obligations—and—for I trust we are both *superstitious* enough to attribute a *charm* at least to the prayers and blessings of a wretched widow—you will have indeed most fervent prayers offered up by her. I know, how many applications you must have—yet you will at least excuse the present and believe me, my dear Sir

With esteem and affectionate admiration

Your friend and servant

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 173

To the MORGANS,¹ *St. James' Square, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

348 *Strand*,
Thursday Noon, Jan. 14, 1808.

MY DEAR FRIENDS

I arrived at the Gloster yesterday morning something more than an hour after the usual Time, having had a most unpleasant journey owing to a succession of vicious horses—The moonlight tho' not always of the clearest, lessen'd the danger, which in a dark night would have been very serious. My companions were a youth going to the artillery school at Woolwich, a mannish kilcrop—a Colonel Peacock, the brother of the Barrack Master at Malta, not held there in high honour from his countenancing General Vallette's intimacies with his wife, Lady Dallan's daughter—this Colonel a free and easy proud fool, very remarkably stupid and uninformed—and a third gentleman a merchant whose jokes and general conversation made it charitable toward human nature to hope that his mother had born and reared him in a Brothel—all three with enormous great coats. From being twice obliged to get out in the rain, and from the very great confinement of my limbs, I was more than ordinarily unwell yesterday morning. However after having attended Mr. Dibdin's ² Lecture at the R. Institution, I accompanied Dr. Callcot ³ to a sort of Glee or Catch Club, composed wholly of professional singers and was much delighted. Bartleman,

¹ John J. Morgan of Bristol, his wife, Mrs. Mary Morgan, and her sister, Charlotte Brent, with whom Coleridge was to spend several years, in London, Bristol, and Calne. The Morgans ministered to him during the years 1810-1816, when he was almost conquered by opium. A large number of Coleridge's letters to the Morgans were transcribed by E. H. Coleridge, and afford an intimate picture of the poet prior to his domestication with the Gillmans.

² At his lecture at the Royal Institution on January 13, 1808, the Rev. Thomas F. Dibdin (1776-1847) made a public announcement of Coleridge's lectures. (Cf. *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism*, T. M. Raysor, 1930, ii. 4.)

³ John Wall Callcott (1766-1821) the composer, lectured on music at the Royal Institution in 1806.

Harrison, Cooke, Greatorex, Smith were the principal singers—Webb, the patriarch of the club, and Father of Catches and Glee in the country, was present and I was much interested by his affectionate cheerfulness under his grievous burthen of Age and infirmities, as well as by the fervent affection payed to him by all the others; and Bartleman and Harrison pleased me as much as men as they did of course as singers. They either were, or were polite enough all to appear to be, marvellously delighted with me; and all the musical entertainments of the town are open to me without expences.

My own Lecture commences tomorrow ¹—till that is over, I can think of nothing else—only that I am, my dear Friends,

Most affectionately and earnestly

Yours, S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 174

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Inasmuch as Coleridge refers to his lectures, and to proof sheets of Clarkson's, *The History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (1808), this letter must belong to early February, 1808.]

Saturday Morning, 3 o'clock,
[February, 1808.]

DEAR SOUTHEY

Having tried in vain to sleep or even to feel inclined to it, I had better sit up and look at something, than enfever my head and eyes either by keeping my eyelids closed, or staring at the curtains. We have had Storm, and Snow, and Frost. From Thursday Midnight having been forced to get out of Bed two or three times on Thursday night, I increased my Hoarseness so much, that it became impossible for me to

¹ This would make the first lecture January 15, 1808, not January 12, as Campbell says. (See *Life*, 167 note.) The lectures were given, at irregular intervals, until June, 1808. For an outline of Coleridge's plan for these lectures, see Letter 170, September 11, 1807; and for the text of these lectures, see T. M. Raysor, *op. cit.* ii. 3-23.

give my Lecture, which at all events it would have been dangerous to do, and yet but for that I had resolved to do it. I have not left my bedroom since my return from the last lecture. The inflammation on my Bowels has left them so exceedingly irritable and prone to re-inflammation (which even in a slight degree produces an instant prostration of strength, and stomach sickness) that till the weather becomes more vernal, I have little chance of bringing my Health back even to its former *Par impar*. Dr. Crompton is in town ; and I cannot barricade him out, O ! O ! never mind ! He'll see *me*. I must, I must, see him and in he dashes—rattles away, and when I am near sinking under him, cries, now, now you are quite well—I never saw you look better. God bless him ! he is a noble hearted fellow, and I should like him if it were only that he loves and is loved by that angel woman, his Wife. Besides, I like him too for his constancy to all whom he has ever countenanced, John Thelwall for instance, nay and I like his company too very much, only not in hours of Disease or dejection. On Wednesday I was surprized and much affected by a call from my old school-fellow, school-patron and Cambridge Friend (during my First Term) Middleton. How much misery should I have escaped, in all human probability, if he had been but one year my Senior, instead of three. He was evidently much affected at seeing me—and ill in bed. We had a long and interesting conversation, and much I regret, that he quitted town that very day—He has just published a Volume,¹ on the Greek article—the very sight of the Book did my Heart good, the size, type, weight [of] all the Antipodes of the *dolus bibliopolicus*—a weighty, plain-pointed, plain-papered Octavo of 700 pages, and a most masterly work it is ; the production of a good logician and a sound Scholar, it does honour to the Church of England, and will raise its character abroad. It is the ablest philological support of the Trinity, in existence and is of almost equal interest to the general Greek Scholar. Not that I entirely

¹ *i.e.* *The Doctrine of the Greek Article ; applied to the criticism and the illustration of the New Testament*, Thomas F. Middleton, 1808.

adopt his Theory ; or that it has overthrown my own Scheme of the Articles. No ! on the contrary I feel certain that mine will take in all his Truths ; and it has enabled me to detect several errors in *his* work and to explain a number of rules which *he* has been obliged to refer to the *idiosyncrasy* of the Greek. On the other hand I have received great and various instruction from it—and see my own Scheme in a fuller light and as to Socinian textualism there it lies ! in shakes and shatters ! not a fragment of the mirror large enough to see an eye in ! Dear Mr. Estlin in speaking of me in a large company a few weeks ago said—His intellect is all gone, Sir ! all his genius is lost, quite lost. He is a mere superstitious Calvinist, Sir !

If I had spirits I could tell you a good story of Dr. Stock whom I had one evening cock-pecked into an opinion of Wordsworth's merit as a Poet and who came next morning to C. Danvers (at whose house we had met) complaining of my conduct as immoral or very improper, carrying people's minds away by subtleties, and warmth of eloquence etc., etc. The poor man had been hen-pecked out of it again. But Charles Danvers will tell it more accurately. I heard from all quarters of the insolence and overbearing Self-conceit of Mrs. Stock and the poor Doctor who seems by nature good and kind she treats openly as a mere Insignificant. Tho' I laughed, yet inwardly I had a sick pang. . . . I was much pleased with much of John Morgan ; it was not necessary to have found out his reverential Regard for your memory—(for so it must be to him) in order to perceive the impression that your then mind and mood made on his, he being then but a Lad. It is even painful to see how superior he is in thought and moral tact, to all those he consorts with and the living with none out of his household whom he can seriously be in sympathy with has had an effect of making him reserved and of low spirits. I was surprized at finding his understanding so much superior to my former idea of him. Bye the by, I was a good [deal] with Cottle comparatively (for I was seldom out of doors at all). He is quite himself again, nay, better than ever ; he explained the past *satisfactorily* to

me, for he did not deny or wish to conceal that he had wrapped up his imagination in delusions, that produced, while they lasted, an undesirable state of moral feelings. When his *Cambria*¹ or the conquest of Edward I. comes out, I should like very much to give a gratifying Review of it and if it had been a little, or *so* altered in the plan, so as to have made the Distinction of a Conquest of an uncivilized [Part] by a more civilized and larger Part of the same natural Realm, from foreign conquest, continually *afloat*, and so as to leave the Conqueror all-justified and the Conquest as [a] complacent thought in the mind, and yet Llewellyn etc. in full possession of your affection and sympathy it would really claim a considerable share of honest Praise. The Lyrical and dramatic parts are the best. Indeed it is to be regretted that he did not compose it in heroic Rhyme. Fluent Rhyme-Verse is natural to him, and would have pleaded in behalf of this work with a large number of Readers. It is scarcely given to one in an age to write blank verse *numerously*—*numero, et pondere*.

When I heard by Letter that you were hourly expected at Bristol on your way to Taunton, I wrote instantly to J. Morgan, to entreat you in my name to return via London. If I can but get about again, my mind was never more active nor more inclined to steady work. Indeed I daily do more than I ought to do. Advise me, which I should learn first as the groundwork the Castilian or the Portuguese? If the former which is the best Dictionary Newman's or Stevens', or is there a third better than either? Is the French-Spanish D. better than the English? But probably this is out of your Beat—you having learnt the Languages in the country and therefore *soon* used Dictionaries of the Language. And what is the best of those? and what is the name of the Vocabulary you once, I think, mentioned to me, containing solely all the words of Moorish Origin? How goes on Brazil with you? I was quite alarmed some time ago by seeing an advertisement with a name which struck me as that which Mr. Hill had mentioned to you as being the only man who

¹ Cottle's *Fall of Cambria* was published in 1809.

possessed the same materials with those in your hands. Was it. . . .¹

I have read the sheets of the 1st vol. of dear Mr. Clarkson's History of the Abolition² etc. The grave intensely common commonplace, the mild and genial dulness of the first 3 pages, disappoints one most delightfully, for all the rest is deeply interesting, written with great purity as well as simplicity of Language, which is often vivid and felicitous (as the monthly Rev. would say) and nothing can surpass the moral beauty of the manner in which he introduces himself and relates his own maxima pars in that Immortal War—compared with which how mean all the conquests of Napoleon and Alexander! Percival³ is about to send commissioners to the Coast of Africa, to see what can be done in the way of virtuous Trade. So deep has been my despondency that for many days nothing but my horror of sea-constipations, and the circumstance of my Assurance limiting me to Europe and to Dry Land, prevented me from applying for one to Mr. P. thro' his sister, Lady Elizabeth, and Lord Egmont. If Mrs. S. could be happy there, could you endure to spend 5 or 10 years at Rio de Janeiro? I have a notion, that is a divine country, in point of climate and Landscape.

Please to say to Mrs. Coleridge, that she is quite mistaken as to Mr. King's not being alarmed about the possible deterioration of Dervy's dear eyes. He spoke and spoke and spoke again to me—for as to calling, what could that have done, when I could not make up my courage to the exhibition of the Bella Donna, the dreadful medicament from which alone he expected any decisive effect. And a drop or two too much, or too little diluted might make the pupil of his eye start from its Holdings and shrink up like Geraldine's! Is it too late for a philological or theological article to be sent to the Annual?

Yours truly

S. T. C.

¹ The name here is illegible.

² Coleridge reviewed Clarkson's work in the *Edinburgh Review* (July, 1808), xxiv. 355-379. The review has never been reprinted.

³ Coleridge probably refers to Spencer Perceval (1762-1812), who was at this time Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Duke of Portland.

LETTER 175

To THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

[From the original letter in the possession of the grand-daughters of De Quincey, the Misses Bairdsmitth. Published in part, *De Quincey Memorials* . . . A. H. Japp, 1891, i. 138-140. Late in July, 1807, De Quincey met Coleridge at Nether Stowey, and he, like so many others, was overwhelmed by Coleridge's mind and personality. He soon learned of Coleridge's pecuniary difficulties, and with the greatest delicacy he gave Coleridge, through Cottle and anonymously, a gift of £300. For details of this gift, see Japp, A. H., *op. cit.*, i. 127-134.]

348, *Strand*.
Tuesday Night,
 [Postmark, Feb. 3, 1808.]

DEAR DE QUINCEY

I have suffered considerable alarm at not having seen you for so many days : lest you should be ill, or malaccident have befallen you. I myself have had a Relapse of a very fearful menace. Having walked to and from Lamb's to procure his MSS. selections from the Dramatists of the Age of Shakespeare, I stopped in our Office below, to look over the Courier : and altho' I could not have stayed above five minutes, yet (in some small part perhaps the wetness of the Newspaper might have been the *Κακοδαίμων Κακοδαιμονίζων* as actual or predisposing cause or both) the street-damp struck up from my Shoes to my Bowels, and passed like a poison-flash thro' my nervous System. . . .

.¹ If it be so, if the various Symptoms, which have haunted me, I scarce know how long, do not disappear on using exercise which I cannot do till the weather is quite settled either into warm, or frosty, fair weather—I shall begin a course of alkaline Dissolvents—and if they do nothing, I must sacrifice as meekly as I may. *τῇ βιοθανάτῳ διθοτεμνομένῳ* [sic] for I believe the Reflex Form is more appropriate in this case than either purely active or purely passive. O would to heaven ! (depressing as the Suspicion has been to me) yet would to Heaven ! that I had to utter no less tolerable groans ! There

¹ The omitted passage deals with Coleridge's intestinal complaint and details certain remedies he proposed trying.

is a passage in Jer. Taylor's Holy Dying, at the conclusion of one of the earlier Chapters, of transcendent pathos and eloquence, which my last sentence recalled to my recollection.

I write however not to trouble your feelings with useless concern—indeed, I had not the most distant intention of doing so or even Thought, till I had already written it, from blind Instinct of the Heart's Weakness—but first and chiefly to ascertain whether any worse cause has prevented my seeing you than the distance, the weather, or preoccupation—and secondly, to say that—no Relapse happening to make it absolutely impracticable, or other cause equivalent—I shall give my lecture on Friday Afternoon, two o'clock—and that an admission Ticket will be left for you with the Door-keeper, unless I hear from you that you cannot come. Should this be the case (*quod Di avertant*—relatively, of course to the occasion not the effect) be so good as to let me have a Line from you immediately—This indeed I request at all events, for I do not know why—probably from my own low spirits and general Languor of heart—I have had Bodings utterly out of all Proportion to the exact number of Days that you have been absent. I have neither written to or heard from Grasmere for a long time. Should you have occasion to write, you will remember me to them, and say that I hope to write soon. I have had to begin such a volume of Letters to them dolefully, that I myself feel an insupportable Disgust by anticipative Sympathy, that I shrink away like a cowed dog from the Task of adding to the number—and having nothing of Joy to communicate to them I would rather they should hear of the contrary from others than from myself. That there is such a man in the World, as Wordsworth, and that such a man enjoys such a Family, makes both Death and my inefficient Life, a less grievous Thought to me.

Believe me your's, with affectionate Esteem,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 176

To ROBERT SOUTHEY, *Greta Hall, Keswick, Cumberland.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

Tuesday, Feb. 9th, 1808.

DEAR SOUTHEY

I received this afternoon your headpiece to Mrs. Coleridge's Letter which, as usual, she has not dated. I certainly only meant by my statement of the difficulty that prest on me respecting a Review of the Poems,¹ to draw forth your advice—and as far as I can recollect asked, as one main datum of the solution, at what time the Annual was published. But it is probable, that I wrote confusedly—my health being even then far worse than I suffered to be known. However I wrote soon after my arrival in town almost immediately to Longman, and a second time, but received no answer. He treats me carelessly enough, and tho' I have never wronged him except by disappointing his expectations, yet having done that, I deserve no better of him—or rather he treats me more civilly than I deserve and I should be in perfect charity with him, and that Jew with the Presbyterian name his partner—aye *Rees* I mean—if I could get rid of the more than suspicion, that with all his professed—nay, and I believe, sincere regard for you—esteem, as far [as] such a nature is susceptible of such a feeling, he entertains for you beyond doubt—that he has not made fair and liberal bargains with you. You are the last man in the world I shall presume to advise—but for myself I would rather give a work away than nominally sell it for a share of the net profits—a happy word, that *net* profits—it must be large Fish with a vengeance, such as the Lay of the Last Minstrel,² or Plea-

¹ I suppose Coleridge refers to *Specimens of the Later English Poets*; possibly he had in mind the second edition of *Madoc*. Southey was evidently asking Coleridge to give him favourable publicity. Three days after this letter, he wrote to Coleridge: "Puff me, Coleridge! if you love me, puff me! Puff a couple of hundreds into my pocket!" *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, iii. 134.

² Scott's, *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was published in 1805.

tures of Memory,¹ or Mr. Fox's Sketches of the two Chapters of his intended History,² that shall not escape thro' the meshes : Some one (I forget who) was saying that you are about to give a new Translation of Don Quixote, taking the very oldest Translation, which Lamb speaks of with Rapture, as the ground-work and note to which you were to pitch your style. I am afraid, this is not true. If you do any more job work of how much glory and respectability would this gain you ? If it were only the drawing out of reading that damned thing of Smollett's³—but there I would have it printed in a classical manner, so that the paper and the shape of the book, and the type, should all be in keeping with the style. I cannot but hope, that there must be other works of Cervantes worthy of admiration, and that he must have had contemporaries of merit. I believe that most admirable, and only not Cervantic work, the Spanish Rogue was considerably posterior to him. I have just learned Spanish and Portuguese enough to read half a dozen easy pages, at times, without difficulty, but not enough to remember whether it is Spanish or Portuguese without looking and recollecting a bit. If I could get a Spanish and Portuguese Dictionary—i.e. Sp. explained by P. or vice versâ, together with a Spanish and Italian Dictionary, I should take great pleasure in dedicating my after dinner hours, to both languages. I have a very nice odd volume of Franciosini ; but unfortunately it is the Italian and Spanish, not the Spanish and Italian. It is the most entertaining Dict. I ever looked into, full of Jac. Miller jokes. I have his grammar too. When you understand a language, that is nearly related to one you wish to acquire, it must be of great advantage, both in point of ease, and philosophical purpose to have the dictionary of the one by the other. I should have mastered the Swedish and Danish before this time, if the cursed French (War, I was

¹ Rogers' *Pleasures of Memory* was published in 1792.

² Fox's *History of the Early Part of the Reign of James the Second, with an introductory chapter* appeared in 1808, two years after Fox's death.

³ Smollett's translation of *Don Quixote* was published in 1755. The work while vivid in style shows an inadequate knowledge of the original.

going to say—but spite of Roscoe's whimpering Scotch review pamphlet¹ it is a blessed war for us, compared with any peace we can make) did not make it nigh impossible to get anything from abroad. I know of no means (and I am exceedingly anxious on my own account to discover any) of even sending a letter to Italy. I am not certain that I ever heard even the name of Hervey. I have myself many a scrap illustrating the laws by which language would polypize ad infinitum—and a complete History of its original formation—My Jesuit volumes—3 in one, the first Italian, the second Portuguese, and the third Italian, all relate to Japan or China. Pray did you not once mention to me a History of the Inquisition written by an Inquisitor? What is the Title? and where am I likely to be able to see it? Likewise be so good as to inform me whether you know any Catholic work in any language defending the punishment of Heretics etc.—If you had been coming up to London, you would have served me by bringing up those books in the Quarto of old German Poetry, which you lent to Sharon Romer—and likewise the Romance in Latin Hexameters.

I am writing this worthless Letter without knowing whether it is to find you at Keswick. Mrs. Coleridge's letter last but this of to-day was steeped in despondency—literally every sentence had its sorrow—and in the last one written in such high spirits that she has forgotten to send me any news at all. Are you not going S. Westward? Whence originated those various rumours—that you are expected by the Bristolians at Bristol, by the Stowies at Bridgwater and the Londoners in London?

In giving my opinion of your answer to W. Scott I forgot to mention my regret at one joke that is too like an insult, and was unworthy the rest of the letter—that one word *Judge* vexed me.²

¹ William Roscoe's *Consideration on the causes, objects and consequences of the present war, and on the expediency, or the dangers of peace with France*, appeared (2nd edition) in 1808.

² Scott had written Southey, asking him to contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*; Southey's refusal is printed in the *Life and Correspondence*, iii. 124-128. Coleridge here refers to Southey's sarcastic mention of

I remain ill and speak from no fit of Despondency, when I say that I know, I have not many weeks to live. I could scarcely read my last Lecture thro'—the animated passages few as they were I was obliged to omit, and scarcely took my eyes off the paper. As I went thither from my bed, so I returned thence to my bed, and have never quitted it except for an hour or two, sometimes a little longer, sometimes less, at night to have the bed made.

As you never write me anything respecting family matters, I expected to have heard from Mrs. C. how many children you have, when Mrs. Southey lay in, and whether boy or girl.

Lamb cannot get his printer on.¹ I suppose Longman who has taken the work on terms which Lamb should not have assented to, had I been in town and tolerably well has, I suppose, told the Printer, that he need not hurry about it—it is of no consequence etc. It is done with excellent Taste, and the notes that I have seen (not quite the first half) are delicious. Mr. W. Taylor called again this morning; I regretted, that I was quite incapable of seeing any body, being in great pain and sickness. He seems very amiable and it would be a twofold sin of impudence and uncharitableness to [have] presumed to have gaged a man's understanding in a first conversation, of little more than half an hour. All I dare to say, is that I had anticipated more subtlety, less of the Trot Trot on the beaten road of Hartley and explanations of everything by nothing—or what is much the same—by the word association. But I doubt not, he would rise superior in my opinion if I were with him for any length of time—Do not think from the first lines of this letter that I am vexed at not writing the Review—it will be far better that whatever I do shall appear in a different form. For I can speak more freely of the antagonists. But Charles Lloyd's

Jeffrey (editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, 1803-1829) as "Judge Jeffrey." A full account of the affair, including Southey's letter to Coleridge, is to appear at an early date in an article, *Southey and the Edinburgh Review* in *Modern Philology* (University of Chicago).

¹ Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets contemporary with Shakespeare* appeared in 1808.

name did give me a feeling of sadness. No human heart can retain anger for a shorter time than mine. All my old acquaintances spite of quarrels are still my acquaintances and loved in exactly the same proportion ; but of that man's character I have an unfeigned horror. Cottle who wrote to me, and whom I often visited and was glad to be undeceived and to find him returned to himself, has finished his Epic Poem—and it is printing as fast as possible. I wanted very much to review his *Psalms* : ¹ which I like very much. He has certainly an extraordinary happiness in rhyme-versification. O that he would but give up Blank Verse—Some of the Odes in his Epic Poem are very fine.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

If Mr. S. have left Keswick it need not be forwarded.

LETTER 177

To JOHN J. MORGAN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter has no salutation.]

March 17, 1808.

I have observed indeed in more than one or two instances that lawyers in their careless hands write more unintelligibly than any other class of men. Jack Colson's letters look like a *copy* of a good flowing hand—and yet I could never read three lines together without boggling—and as his conceptions are not *all* too (as the Germans) logical, I never wholly decyphered any one of his epistles, to me, or to Mr. Poole. My dear Morgan ! I am glad to be able to turn off to any subject from the mournful one of myself. The anecdote of Vixen is not only interesting but valuable—Similar facts are commonly believed ; but it is rare indeed to have them so accurately stated and circumstanced. Were I even in tolerable strength of body and spirits I would go thro' it analytically, as a distinct *datum* for canine psychology. As you have rightly observed, the memory is the least part,

¹ Cottle's translation of the *Psalms* was published in 1801.

and yet even that is important because it completely confutes the dogma of Aristotle, which has been adopted by almost all after-metaphysicians—that Beasts and Infants *remember*, man only *recollects*—i.e. that hearts only *recognise*, the object being presented anew. But here is a clear instance of reflective recollection, proved by all the passions of distinct anticipation. And now again Pain drags me back to my unfortunate self. It is my wish and the dictate of my reason to come to you, and instantly to put myself under Dr. Beddoes, and to open the whole of my case. But yet—forgive me, *dear* dear friends ! but yet I cannot help again and again questioning myself, what *right* I have to make your house my hospital—how I am justified in bringing sickness and sorrow and all the disgusts and *troublesomenesses* of disease, into your quiet dwelling. Ah ! whither else can I go ? . . .¹ To Grasmere ? They are still in their cottage, one of their rooms is proved untenable from damp—and they have not room scarcely for a cat. Not to speak of the distance. And shall I stay here ?² Alas it is sad, it is very sad. The noises of the Pressmen at between 4 and 5 in the morning, and continued till 8—the continual running up stairs by my door to the Editor's room, which is above me, the frequent calls of persons who wish to see me, and whom I cannot see—the forced intrusion of some and the alarm in consequence of every knock at the private door—trifles in themselves—are yet no trifles to me. Saving a few hours at night, in order to let my bed be made, I have not been out of bed I scarce remember when. All this morning I was so bad, I thought it was all over with me—O what agony I suffered ! Pray write to me by return of post—and in the meantime I will exert myself to the utmost. Be assured that I feel the intensest gratitude—I entreat dear Miss Brent to think of what I wrote as the mere lightheadedness of a diseased body, and a heart sore-stricken fearing all things from every one. I love her most dearly ! O had I

¹ Sentence erased.

² Coleridge during this period occupied a room at the *Courier* office, 348 Strand.

health and youth and were what I once was—but I played the fool and cut the throat of my own happiness, of my genius, of my utility, in compliment to the merest phantom of overstrained honor—O Southey, Southey, what an unthinking man were you, and an unjust ! . . .¹

S. T. C.

LETTER 178

To DANIEL STUART.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 71-74.]

Thursday Night, [1808.]

MY DEAR SIR

I inclose the letter as the best explanation and advocate of my earnest wishes. I have done every thing which in my present severe sufferings I can do. I have written to Sir G. Beaumont to apply to Lord Mulgrave, I have written to his Lordship's Brother, whom I once met in company and who was very attentive to me, and I have urged Mr. Clarkson immediately to exert his Interest with the Thorntons and Wilberforce, to procure this poor unhappy Sufferer's release. Like most who are enemies only to themselves, he has suffered more than Rhadamanthus, or the other Judges of Hell in their worst humors would have inflicted on him, for his imprudence. But I well know, that lesser Dignities can do at once what the first man in power boggles at, and "really cannot transgress the rule, he has laid down." If by any Interest of your's, you can procure Henry Hutchinson's Liberation,² you will have the fervent gratitude of Mrs. Wordsworth and her Sister whom, from some strange circumstance which I am unable to decypher : for unfeignedly I have the greatest faith in your *tact* as to character you have been somehow or other led to misunderstand. It is not very probable, that two men so unlike as Wordsworth and myself should have fallen into

¹ Sentence erased.

² For a full account of Henry Hutchinson's strange wanderings, see *Memorials of Coleorton* . . . W. Knight, 1887, ii. 45-47.

the same Error, both having known the same Object for 8 or 9 years—and he almost always in the same House. Would to God I had health and liberty !—If Sense, Sensibility, Sweetness of Temper, perfect Simplicity and an unpretending Nature joined to shrewdness and entertainingness, make a valuable Woman, Sara H. is so ; for the combination of natural Shrewdness and disposition to innocent humor joined with perfect Simplicity and Tenderness is what distinguishes her from her Sister, whose character is of a more solemn Cast. Had Captn. Wordsworth lived, I had hopes of seeing her blessedly married, as well as prosperously; but it is one of the necessary Results of a Woman's having or acquiring feelings more delicate than those of women in general, not to say of the same Rank in Society, that it exceedingly narrows the always narrow circle of their Prospects, and makes it a stroke of Providence when they are suitably married. O ! to a man of sensibility, especially if he have not the necessity of turmoiling in life, and can really centre his mind to quiet enjoyment, there is no medium in marriage between great happiness and thorough Misery—but that Happiness is so great, that all outward considerations become ridiculous to a man who has enjoyed it, if in opposition to the possession of a Woman, who is capable of being at once a Wife, a Companion, and a Friend.

I have within the last fortnight received such a tremendous Proof of what a Man must suffer who has been induced to unite himself to a Woman, who can be neither of the three in any effective sense, that (as what sinks deepest most easily comes uppermost) it has led me into a digression very remote from the subject of my Letter, which yet, Heaven knows ! has interested me as much as if H.H. had been my own Brother—and especially indeed from considerations of poor Mrs. Wordsworth's alarming State of Health, to whom the Liberation of her unfortunate Brother would be a Charm of Healing.

Unfeignedly your obliged and sincere friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 179

To DANIEL STUART.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 76-78.]

April, 1808.

DEAR FRIEND

I feel myself impelled to write to you some ten Sentences on a subject so full of anxious Hope to you, so full of regretful anguish to me. Exclusive of Health, Virtue, and respectable Connections, there seem to me to be just four points, on which a wise man ought to make calm and most deliberate questions—and unless he can answer *all* four queries in the affirmative, he has no chance to be happy—and if he be a man of feeling, no possibility even of being comfortable.¹

1.—Is Aa woman of plain good sense, as manifested by sound judgment as to common occurrences of life, and common persons, and either possessing information enough, or with an understanding susceptible of acquiring it, enough, I say, to be and to become a companion? In few words, has she good sense with average quickness of understanding? 2. Is she of a sympathizing disposition in *general*?—does she possess the sensibility, that a good man expects in an amiable Woman? 3. Has she that steadiness of moral feeling, that simplicity undebauched by lust of admiration, that sense of duty joined with a constancy of nature, which enables her to concentrate her affections to their proper Objects in their proper proportions and relations—to her Sisters, Brothers, Parents, *as* Sisters, Brothers, Parents, to her children, *as* her children, to her Husband, *as* her Husband.

N.B. The second and third Query by no means supersede each other. I know a woman of great sensibility, quick and eager to sympathize, yet ever carried away by the present

¹ This letter seems to be written in answer to one seeking advice about marriage. Stuart, however, did not marry until 1813. The letter should be compared with a "Letter to a Young Lady," *Letters, Conversations and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*, T. Allsop, 1864, 171-179.

object—a worthy uncentering Being. This Woman is a pleasant companion, a lively Housemate, but O ! she would *starve* the Heart, and wound the pride as well as affections, of a Husband—she cannot be a *Wife*. Again, Mrs. Southey is a woman answering tolerably well in affirmative to the third query—She loves her Husband almost too exclusively, and has a great constancy of affection, such as it is. But she sympathizes with nothing, she enters into none of his peculiar pursuits—she only loves *him* ; she is therefore a respectable Wife, but not a Companion. Dreary, dreary, would be the Hours, passed with her—amusement, and all the detail of whatever cheers or supports the spirits, must be sought elsewhere. Southey finds them in unceasing Authorship, never interrupted from morning to night but by sleep and eating.

4. and lastly. Are all these 3 classes of necessary qualities combined with such manners and such a person, as is striking to you—as suits your feelings, and coalesces with your old associations, as a man, as both a *bodily* and *intellectual* man ?

I feel a deep conviction, that any man looking soberly and watching patiently, might obtain a full solution to all these queries, with scarce the possibility of being deluded. He will see too, whether she is highly esteemed and deeply beloved by her Sisters, Brothers, oldest Friends, etc. If there be an atmosphere of true affection and domestic feelings in her family, he cannot help himself breathing it, and perceiving that he breathes it. But alas ! alas ! is it because it is the most important step of human Life, that therefore it so often happens, that it is the only one, in which even wise men have acted foolishly—from haste, or passion, or inquietude from singleness, or mistaken notions of Honor, leading them to walk into the Gulph with their eyes open ! God preserve my friend from this worst of miseries ! God guide my friend to that best of earthly goods, which makes us better by making us happier, and again happier by making us better !

[No conclusion or signature.]

LETTER 180

To DANIEL STUART.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 74-76. Printed in full in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1838.]

[April, 1808.]

MY DEAR STUART

If I did not feel and know, how much and how truly I loved and esteemed you, the weight of my Obligations to you would press heavy on my mind. I write to you now, simply and at once, to ask you to permit me to draw upon you for a sum not exceeding a hundred Pound ;¹ if I live, this with the rest will be gradually repayed to you—if I die, the use I am about to make of it, will secure the repayment. I would at once make over to you all my claims on the R. Institution, amounting exactly to this sum ; but an, I trust, not immoral Pride prevents me. On the contrary, it is my fixed intention to employ a 40*l* due to me in the course of a month to send them back the sum, which I drew upon them for the travelling expenses of my Self and Family.² I have less pride than most men, I have known ; but I owe it to my sweet Children and to my friends, not to suffer myself to be treated ignominiously ; or to be regarded as a Hireling. Few things oppress my Conscience so much, as my repeated non-performance of what I had engaged and God knows ! both meant and expected to have done for you ; but in that instance the delicacy and generosity on your part toward me have always alleviated, often removed, the feeling. If I was not self-satisfied, yet I had another object before my mind, in whose conduct I found an unmixed satisfaction ; and judging of you by myself, I thought, that the sincere

¹ “ I gave *£*100 on the 20th of April, 1808. D.S.” Note by Daniel Stuart.

² In February 1808, Coleridge received *£*40 in advance from the Royal Institution for the course of lectures delivered in 1808 ; in April 1808, Coleridge applied for *£*60 more, and he was sent *£*20 by a servant. (See Letter 182, April 28, 1808). Thoroughly insulted by the manner in which the money was sent, Coleridge apparently determined to return the original *£*40.

and grateful love, I felt toward you at and from the bottom of my Heart, and my exceeding Anxiety to see you happy, increasingly so, and more and more worthy of being happy, formed a sort of imperfect Recompense. But to be insulted by people, to whom I had been under no obligation, *for* whom you in reality (which is "I" to them) had been paying, and to be treated as a Shoemaker—or worse—namely, with the idea—"we must not pay him all beforehand, or he may give us the Slip"—as if I were a Sharper, supposing my powers to continue—or Being without friends interested in my honor, supposing sudden Death or incapacitating Sickness—all this is rather too bad.

Within a day after I have applied the Sum, for which I wish at present and for the best purposes, you shall receive both the right of claim, and the proof that that Right will have been gratefully anticipated. The rest of my Obligations I must leave to Chance and Futurity.

It is rather unpleasant, that Mr. Hardcastle sent word shortly after your note, how eagerly he expected the pleasure of my Company, and that my coming with a Friend was "*a great addition*"; not only from their wish to see and become acquainted with any particular friend of mine, but as it was a proof, that I "*meant to be friendly*", and that he had therefore forced a point, and sent an apology to the Hibernian Meeting, to which he had previously engaged himself. I would have gone, of course; but really what I saw yesterday—which I will explain when I see you, such a counterpart of the very worst parts of my own Fate, in an aggravated Form, in the Fate of the Being, who was my first attachment,¹ and who with her family gave me the first Idea of *an Home*, and inspired my best and most permanent Feelings—joined with a letter from Dr. Bulburgh respecting the Wordsworths, and another from poor Morgan at Bristol concerning his Wife's Health—all coming together overpowered me—I had been forced all yesterevening to exert false Looks, and false spirits, toward one whom I perceived worthy of absolute abhorrence—but this is for our confidential conversation—it agitated

¹ Coleridge refers to Mary Evans.

me however so that when Clarkson called, he himself said, that however different the Day had been, it would have [been] imprudent for me, for I had lain awake weeping for the greater part of the Night, and when I might have slept, was obliged (at 8 o'clock) to get up, in order to welcome at Breakfast an old Friend and Schoolfellow returning to the Indies, and who had stayed two days in London in order to Breakfast with me.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 181

To MISS MATILDA BETHAM.¹

[Original letter, Huntington Library. Published in part, *Fraser's Magazine*, xviii, 76, and *House of Letters*, E. Betham, 1905, 106.]

Monday, April 4, 1808.

DEAR MISS BETHAM

At the time, the little girl delivered me your letter and accompanying present, an acquaintance was coming up stairs who had business of importance, and such as would require half an hour or more to settle, and whose time was valuable yet having, tho' hastily read thro' your note, I could not bear to send back a mere cold acknowledgment of the Receipt.

Tho' I had wholly forgotten the circumstances, to which I owe it, believe me, (if you knew me personally, I venture to affirm, that even this "believe me," would be superfluous) I was more than pleased, I was much affected by the Letter. It breathed a spirit so unlike that of the Letters, one is in the habit of receiving from people of the World—in short, it reminded [me] of my earliest Letters from my dear friends at Grasmere.

The only word in it, which a little surprized me, was that of "*fame*." I assure myself, that your thinking and affec-

¹ Mary Matilda Betham (1776-1852) to whom this letter was addressed, was a miniature painter and a writer of considerable ability. During a visit to Greta Hall in 1809, she painted miniatures of Southey, his son Herbert, Mrs. Coleridge, Mrs. Lovell, and Sara Coleridge.

tionate mind will long ago have made a distinction between fame and reputation ; between that awful thing, which is a fit object of pursuit for the good, and the pursuit of which is an absolute Duty of the great ; that which lives and is a fellow-lâborer of nature under God, producing even in the minds of Worldlings a *sort* of docility, which proclaims, as it were, *silence* in the court of noisy human passions—and the reward of which without superstition we may well conceive to be the consciousness in a future state of each Being, in whose mind and heart the Works of the truly Famous have awakened the impulses and schemes of after excellence. What Joy would it not be to you or to me, Miss Betham ! to meet a Milton in a future state, and, with that reverence due to a superior, pour forth our deep thanks for the noble feelings, he had aroused in us, for the impossibility of many mean and vulgar feelings and objects, which his writings had secured to us ! But putting Fame out of the Question, I should have been a little surprized even at the word “reputation”—having only published a small volume, twelve years ago, which as my bookseller well knows, had no circulation—and in honest truth did not deserve any, tho’ perhaps as much as many that have attained it—a volume given by me to the public, “ My poverty, and not my will, consenting.” I *should* have been surprized even at any *publicity* of my name, if I were less aware of that sad sad stain of the present very *anti-gallican* but woefully *gallicizing* Age, the rage for personality—of talking and thinking ever and ever about A. and B. and L.—names, always names ! The alliterations, “ *Names and Novelties*,” would go far in characterising the *bad* parts of the present generation (for, with pleasure I say it, it has many very good ones). Of me and of my scanty juvenile writings people knew nothing ; but it has been discovered, that I had the destiny of marrying the Sister of Mrs. Southey, that I am intimate with Mr. Southey, and that I and in a more especial manner [am] the Friend and Admirer of Mr. Wordsworth. . . . ¹

¹ The photostat of the letter contains neither conclusion nor signature ; probably both were cut away by an autograph collector.

LETTER 182

To WILLIAM SOTHEBY, 47, *Upper Seymour Street*.

[From the original letter in the possession of Col. H. G. Sotheby.]

348 *Strand*,
Thursday Morning,
 [Postmark, April 28, 1808.]

MY DEAR SIR

I esteem you ; and am therefore desirous of your Esteem. Nor have I ever ceased to feel an interest in your true Fame. Nay, often have I been indignant at seeing your translation of Oberon¹ so popular (too great an honor from [sic] a good man, as I have firm faith, you are, to such a work), and the Saul² comparatively neglected. The Saul—I will not say, I have read—I *read it*. But for some defect of the metre (pardon my freedom—a few months will probably shew, that I now have no ordinary *motive* for sincerity, even tho' my constitutional character had not furnished the *Impulse* to it) but for some defect in the metre, arising from the shortness of the Periods in part, and in part from the pausing so often at the second Syllable which Milton never does, as far as I have examined, except when he means to give an unusual Importance to the words—and even then most often a trochaic, not a spondee, or Iambic—

“ And now his Heart
 Distends with pride, and, hard'ning, in his strength
Glories : ” Book I. 571.—

But when it is an Iambic, it always has and is meant to have some great effect—see Book I. from Line 585 to 615—after all the grand preparation of the imaginative power.

“ He now prepared
 To spēak :—whereat their doubted ranks they bend, etc.”

Of course, I do not apply this remark in all it's force to Lines beginning periods or paragraphs ; tho' even here, it ought to have some attention paid it. As I have neither the wit or the

¹ *Oberon : or Huon de Bourdeaux*, a mask, was published in 1803.

² *Saul ; a poem, in two parts* was published in 1807.

vanity of the younger Pliny, and do not write Letters *to* my friends *for* the World,¹ as dissenting Ministers *preach* to their congregation in the masquerade of a Prayer to their Maker, so I am not very solicitous whether or no my nominative cases are fatherless, or my verbs orphans—all I meant to say is, that tho' my understanding dictates one to two other faults, yet to my *feelings* the metre alone prevents the poem from being *wholly* delightful. Yet great pleasure, and noble sensations has it given me.

I said, I was anxious of your Esteem ; but my Thoughts are like Surinam Toads—as they crawl on, little Toads vegetate out from back and side, grow quickly, and draw off the attention from the mother Toad—Now then straight forward—

I hope, you did not misunderstand my state of feeling respecting the R. Institution, which I cannot but honor because it has assisted, perhaps enabled Davy, to do the glorious things he has done, and I trust is doing, and will do—and which assuredly will place him by the side of Bacon and Newton—for his Inventions are Discoveries, and his discoveries grand general Principles, fruitful, yea creative—but in all other things I deem it most injudiciously managed—nay, perverted. I felt no pain concerning the *smallness* of the *Sum* sent to me ; but at the *manner*—a vexation that partly owing to my giving up my own feeling to Davy's concerning Mr. B.,² and receiving great civilities and professions from him (which when received will always *tell* for something in a good man's heart, whatever his judgement may have decided concerning the Bestower) I had been seduced into an open-heartedness respecting my private concerns, and particular motives for having money at the present moment—(which I have procured from a better quarter)—and that instead of a Letter, or anything respectful, a Servant should be sent, with 20*£* in his *hand*. Had I been their

¹ At other times Coleridge felt differently ; see Letter 119, May 20, 1803.

² Sir Thomas Bernard who helped to establish the Royal Institution in 1800. Coleridge spells the name both Bernard and Barnard.

Shoemaker, what other could they have done ? but *I* have never even treated a Shoemaker thus—I had told Mr. Barnard, that whatever they meant to give me (about 90*£* or an 100*£* remained of what he promised), it would be highly convenient to me at the present time—and (O fool !) assigned my family motives—they *sent* a servant with 20*£* and a verbal *message*—what am I to deduce ? That if *payed* beforehand, I should not do my duty afterwards with such *briskness* ? Gracious Heaven ! and if their Hearts did not dictate the contrary as to my motives, yet as men of the world would not a 5 minutes calculation have shewn them, that taking in my travelling expences, and my necessary expences in town, wholly on account of these Lectures, compared with my cost supposing me at home or at—that too a dear, dear Home—at Wordsworths', I must necessarily be out of pocket, with the 130 or 40*£* ? But sickness or Death might prevent me from giving the whole course— Am I then so friendless, so unhonored in this World, that there is no one Being who would step forward, and repay what was to be repayed, and save my Honor ? Wordsworth, his Wife, his Sister, his Wife's Sister, yea, his very children, would all consent to live on bread and water for a year rather than suffer my name to have such a stain on it. Besides, I was to have had an equal sum the former year for half the number of Lectures. If my paper had permitted, I would have explained to you the justifying circumstances, which suddenly drew back the 50*£*, which I borrowed from you, and was on the point of paying—it shall be sent before I quit town. I seem to feel, that Mrs. Sotheby is in some *little degree some little offended* with me—O ! if she knew, with what heart I look at the increasing beauty and intelligent Innocence of her Daughter's face, with what sympathy of parental Pride and earnest wishes— But this is too deep a matter—
God bless you and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

I hope to have you as my auditor on Friday—as I shall then finish Shakspeare— My next Wednesday will be the introductory one to Milton ; when I hope Mrs. and Miss Sotheby may be present at all events.

LETTER 183

To HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

[Original letter, Dr. Williams's Library. A few lines published, *Diary . . . of Henry Crabb Robinson* (Thomas Sadler), 1872 (third edition), i, 140. Henry Crabb Robinson (1775-1867), to whom this letter is addressed, was the friend of practically every important literary figure of his day. While he did no literary work himself, he carefully preserved all the letters he received and kept a full and interesting diary. His papers are now the property of Dr. Williams's Library, London.]

Tuesday Morning,

[Endorsed by H. C. Robinson, May 3, 1808.]

MY DEAR SIR

Sextenti in the Latin writers, if I remember right, stands for an indefinite number, but dearest Mrs. C.'s ¹ Note first informed me, that "can admit as many as he pleases", is synonymous with twelve Tickets. However, tho' those are disposed of, if you will come a quarter of an hour before two, and find me (as you will) in the apparatus room close by the Lecture Room; you shall be sure to have admittance—not only to day, but during every one of my Lectures, which you may have time or inclination to attend. *Perhaps*, I may have to request you for this day only to sit—where Davy, and a great number of my best and most honored friends sit, some always from *choice*, others for the day only in order to give me an opportunity of introducing more than my number, by putting the Ladies *below*, and sending my male friends above—i.e. in the Gallery. You will find there (I assure you) the *most respectable* part of my audience—those that you at least will regard so.—Basil Montague and his friends will be there—and many others—I should not wonder if Dr. Bell ² (whom you will know by his pale pleasant face and spectacles) was to creep into a corner there, from an amiable curiosity about a subject in which he must feel so deep and specific an Interest. I however shall speak just what I feel, under the supposition that he is not present—for no man who ever knew me, suspected me of flattery—

¹ Mrs. Thomas Clarkson.

² Andrew Bell (1753-1832) founded the Madras system of education. For Coleridge's letters to Dr. Bell, see Southey's, *Life of the Rev. Andrew Bell . . .*, 1844, iii.

and I *feel*, that I have a right to praise—for my Heart on such occasions beats in my Brain. Nothing but endless Interruptions and the necessity of dining out far oftener than is either good for me, or pleasant to me, joined with the reluctance to move (partly from previous exhaustion by company, I cannot keep out)—for one cannot, dare not, always be “not at home” or “very particularly engaged” (and the last very often will not serve my Turn)—these added to my bread and cheese employments + my Lectures which are—bread and cheese—i.e. a very losing bargain in a pecuniary view—have prevented me day after day from returning your kind calls. Più verrai, più non posso. I will as soon as I can. In the meantime I have left your name with the old woman, and the attendants in the office, as one to whom I am always at home when I am at home. For Wordsworth has taught me to desire your acquaintance and to esteem you—and need I add that any one so much regarded by Mrs. C. (whom I love even as my very own Sister, whose Love for me with that of Wordsworth’s Sister, Wife, and Wife’s Sister, form almost the only Happiness, I have on earth) can never be indifferent to,

dear Sir,

Your sincere Friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 184

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter was probably in answer to George Coleridge’s letter of April 6, 1807 (see page 371 note). In 1809, after an interchange of letters about the *Friend*, George Coleridge answered the charges set forth, [the separation from Mrs. Coleridge] I never would receive you, and while I think the Gospel to be the word of God delivered by Jesus Christ, I shall continue to be of the same opinion.” (From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.)]

“Certain it is that that letter and the sequel of your conduct towards me is an explanation of my conduct to you. . . . I still hold my resolution, that for such a purpose as your letter set forth, [the separation from Mrs. Coleridge] I never would receive you, and while I think the Gospel to be the word of God delivered by Jesus Christ, I shall continue to be of the same opinion.” (From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.)]

348 *Strand*, May 11, 1808.

You would serve me, Brother! if by return of Post you would be so kind as to send me from the Ottery Register,

properly authenticated by the Vicar and Reader or Churchwarden, of the date of my birth and christening.

Multifold and urgent as late my employment and my calamities have been for the last 7 or 8 months, yet I have been prevented from writing to you chiefly by feelings from within concerning storys :—

“ Which love cannot avenge nor truth forgive.”

I merely snatch this opportunity to say that dear Mrs. Coleridge wrote to Mrs. George Coleridge without my knowledge and before I had time to prepare her, (I had been laid up with a fit of sickness at Bristol so that tho' I received your letter *there*, I had not seen, much less read it with many others till a few days after my arrival at Stowey) before I had prepared her for the unmerited wrong inflicted on us, after such invitations as she had received. I pray you do not suppose that poor as I am the mere expence of bringing my wife and all my children thrée hundred miles from their home in order to see their “ Father's Mamma,” and that of their return to the same distance, was that which affected me, ill as I could afford it. No Sir ! conscious before my maker that even the errors of my youth have been most grossly exaggerated and wanderings attributed to want of principle which proceeded from excess of sensibility and moral cowardice in affairs which most other men would have laughed at—yet since my leaving the University what deviation from honor or rectitude can be fairly charged to me ? Are not my old College Friends, two of whom are now Tutors of the College and among the most respected of the University, my friends still ? Do not those who have known me longest and been with me night and day as it were for years and years love and esteem me most ? Have not all calumnies concerning me, saving those from my own family, proceeded from persons abhorred by those who know them intimately as liars, or pitied as madmen ? What *have* I done that a Letter written to you in the overflowing of Love and grateful remembrance (for to a deserted orphan every kindness appeared great)—that a letter written,

Heaven knows, in the hope that your authority and kindness would mediate and produce a happy effect on a mind softened perhaps by being at the birthplace and among the family of the Father of the children—that this should be disclosed, so disclosed that long before I knew it, a mere youth at Bristol assigned to a family accustomed to revere me, as the reason to refuse to call me his Uncle and to see his Cousins “that the Family had resolved not to receive me”.¹ This resolution was perhaps in your power, the circumstances that accompanied it were *not*—that is not *morally*. Are my pursuits less moral or useful than those of my—for so I am to name them—Brothers—of if I may appeal to a . . .² from *my* nature, are my friends and connections less honourable or splendid? O would to God the omniscient that every hour of my life could be made manifest with all my actions and all their contact and commuting of feelings, impulses, motives—and at the same time the same process take place with those of my Brothers! Before my Maker I should sink down in Confusion, but before men I should not have to wear a blush on my cheeks from the Comparison— I speak not that a Richard Hart³ could reply to a kind enquiry concerning me from a young gentleman, “I know nothing and wish to know nothing of such a Fellow” (these were the words, the syntax only somewhat rectified) but I should be indeed ashamed if I had not been deeply wounded that one honored individual’s feelings had been prejudiced against me⁴

¹ “Who the mere youth at Bristol could be who communicated to your Friends there ‘that the Family had resolved not to receive you’ I cannot augur—except it was James Coleridge on his way to join his Regiment in Ireland—I declare that I never made such a resolution, except in the instance which I stated in my letter.” (George Coleridge to S. T. C.)

² MS. illegible.

³ A brother of Mrs. George Coleridge.

⁴ “You may remember that I answered your letter and requested that you would, within a week or a fortnight, tell me if Mr. Jos. Wedgwood was not the Person alluded to in your letter—that he might himself vindicate for me what I was not disposed to do for myself under the imputation of such a calumny—you never answered my letter, and I therefore sent your Paragraph to Mr. Wedgwood, who informed me that he had (as in truth he could) amply justified my conduct.” (George Coleridge to S. T. C.).

by a person whom that man would never have known but for my enthusiastic praises and expressions of grateful Love—When I was with you with Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley, your wife informed her that I had been a very bad young man, that my Brother had done wonders for me, but she hoped now that I was reformed, I should be able to repay the money.¹ Poor as I have been (not for want of opportunities to have become the wealthiest of the family, but because I did not feel this to be *my* calling) yet had I not judged of your feelings by my own, long ago I should have requested you to permit me to do away with the sole reason you can have for treating me thus by sending in the account of my alimony—as to the little pangs I must have suffered from my sweet children asking me “why they must not see their Grandmamma, their uncles and cousins”—they are over and I have endeavoured to compensate for the disappointment of a fond mother, who had indulged the venial pride of showing you what had been believed by so many strangers to their blood. I would not die concealing my feelings—Nor have I any self-respecting motive at present even of the most honourable kind, except the regret that I shall not be able to cultivate the friendship of my nephew John Coleridge,² of whose virtues and faculties I anticipate all I dare anticipate from a mind whose native nobleness is to be counteracted by systems which transmute by negligent alchemy our virtue and religion into selfish prudence, and dissect the conscience to value men for what they do knowably by the mass not for what they *are* actually. But he is a noble being and to Heaven with prayers I commend him.

¹ “That part of your letter which refers to a conversation between your wife and mine, will not possibly appear discreditable to the latter if Mrs. Samuel can recollect, what and who led to the subject of your expences [at Cambridge]. Is it likely from what you have learned of Mrs. G. Coleridge, that she would do anything thro’ malice? Is it not more fair to consider that in the moment of confidential communication nothing was said at the time but what Mrs. Samuel thought friendly? A detached sentence of the most innocent intention in the hand of anger will set a whole Nation in flames.” (George Coleridge to S. T. C.).

² John Taylor Coleridge (1790-1876) the judge, later became a warm supporter of his Uncle.

I need no answer. The certificate is the last favour I beg—and only add that if you will inform me of the amount of the debt to my family, it shall be ultimately paid to you if I live . . .¹ of years, even though I shorten my own and my children's simple means—and if I die shortly it is still mentioned in my will. Had I not felt a greater reverence for all that bears the name of my revered father, and whom (I confess I have a feeling, one third pride and two thirds tenderness in being told that I strongly resemble him in person and mind) I could by merely stating to 4 or 5 of my friends the cause of my distress, have procured in a few weeks the sum necessary to liquidate the debt, with a certainty that I could never have been considered as a justifying cause of either themselves treating my name and me contumeliously or in telling others to do it! Often and quite irrelevantly to myself have I noticed the injustice of resting the condemnation of an individual, in testimony derived from his nearest relations, merely because they were such, without any enquiry how much or how intimately they have known him, or what opportunities they had of seeing him, or witnessing his habits of conduct, his tone of principle—and without reflecting that when Brothers can exert themselves against an orphan brother, the latter must be either a mere monster, or the former warped by some improper passion.

I presume that in general it is not difficult to forgive a tedious length of letter, when the receiver is assured that *once for all*, that it will never recur.² With sincere—often with *fervent* wishes for your permanent well-being; that which my understanding compels me to believe may either not be or may cease to be, I remain your brother

S. T. C.

¹ MS. torn.

² George Coleridge, who had acted the rôle of a father to Coleridge, understood his brother and realized that this was only a temporary outburst. In summing up this letter he says:

“Except these subjects of complaint against me—all of which I aver to be utterly mistaken or false—your letter contains little but declamation, which showed your talents, and temper at the time, but not your sense.” The affection between the brothers survived this quarrel.

LETTER 185

To THOMAS N. LONGMAN.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter indicates that some little friction was already being felt between the Wordsworths and Coleridge.]

[*Postmark, May 23, 1808.*]

DEAR SIR

I am painfully surprised by the extract from Mr. Wordsworth's Letter.

Mr. W. came to town, among other motives, to publish his poem.¹ He offered Terms—did not choose to submit his work to your previous inspection—and of course felt them, as declined. I did not see the matter in exactly the same light, as he did. I thought, that in the purchase, not of a total Copyright, but of a mere first Edition—and that at a very handsome price—and that too from an author, whose last publication had not been so favorably received, as his admirers anticipated—a Publisher had an undoubted *right* (in the *equity* between man and man, as well as in the vulgar sense of the word) to have the means of some distinct Information concerning it's nature, and the probability of it's immediate Sale, from some *indifferent* Judge.

As to it's intrinsic merits he might perhaps be disposed to rely on the Author's own opinion and that of his particular friends ; but what is this to the persons, who are to purchase a first Edition at a risk, which can be made to answer only by a quick return ?

I advised him to leave the Poem with me, and to appoint me his plenipotentiary and He did so— Mr. T. Rees was so good as to pass an hour or two with me ; we read part of the Poem and discussed the whole—he made his report to you—the result was, that tho' still in favor of the prudence of your first proposal you however acceded to Mr. Wordsworth's Proposal— I informed him of this—received his full confirmation and found by an after letter that his opinions differed from mine with regard to one essential in the Sale

¹ Referring to *The White Doe of Rylstone*, which was not published until 1815.

of the Poem—therefore confined myself to the correction of mere Verbal inaccuracies which I found very few and very trifling—when I received a letter from Miss Wordsworth, who always, except where she expresses the contrary, writes in her Brother's name and authority, from which 'the following is an Extract—" We are all *very anxious* that the White Doe should be sent to the Press *as soon as possible*. The corrections cannot be of a very difficult or troublesome kind—We think it of the *utmost Importance*, that it should come out before the conclusion of your Lectures is settled."

My Lectures will finish in about a fortnight— I appeal to you, and to common Sense, whether my transmission of the Poem can be deemed a " misinterpretation " of the above ? or whether after having been authorized to negotiate, after the result had been confirmed (not to say, received with thanks) and after I had been thus spurred on, it is exactly agreeable with common English to speak of " Mr. Coleridge's having sent a MSS. poem of *mine* to you "— God bless you, my dear Sir and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. I had sent it before ; but retracted it, in order to write out the parts which spite of the Author's present opinion, I yet wished to alter, in hopes that his opinion might alter—Tis a strange World, Mr. Longman ! especially with those, who have to do with Authors !

LETTER 186

To THOMAS DE QUINCEY, No. 5 Northumberland Street,
Marybone.

[From the original letter in the possession of the grand-daughters of De Quincey, the Misses Bairdsmith. Published in part, *De Quincey Memorials*, . . . A. H. Japp, 1891, i. 135-137.]

[1808.]

MY DEAR DE QUINCEY

If you should meet with Hermann de Emendatione etc., in the course of a month or two (for I shall certainly

not want it for two or three months, even if my Life be continued to me) and it be procurable at a decent price, be so good as to secure it for me. As likewise Longus, Heliodorus, and D'Orville's Chariton. But here I must be distinctly understood—I asked the New Testament from a sincere Desire to have the best good book, as a *Μνημόσυρον ἀντὶ Μνημοσ[ύνης]*—in all the rest, you must consent to be my Commissioner which when I have better health, I will gladly be for you. I do not want any of these books except Hermann's Hymns for Months.¹

And now permit me, my dear young friend ! to do justice to myself as to one part of a character which has not many *positive* bad points in it, tho' in a moral *marasmus* from negatives—from misdemeanours of Omission and from Weakness and moral cowardice of moral Pain—But I can affirm with a *sense* of *certainly*, intuitively distinguished from a mere delusive *feeling* of *Positiveness*, that no man, I have ever known, is less affected by partiality to his own productions or thoughts. It would have been indeed far, far better for me—in some little degree perhaps for society—if I could have attached more importance, greater warmth of feeling, to my own writings. But I have not been happy enough for that. So however it is, that the pleasure of receiving that proof of friendship—"I cannot say, that this or that satisfied me—I did not like this for such and such reasons—it appeared to me slight, not the genuine Stuff, etc."—has often blinded me so far as to believe at once, and for a long season, more meanly of what I had done than after-experience confirmed. I do therefore earnestly ask of you as a proof of Friendship, that you will so far get over your natural modesty and timidity, as without reserve or withholding to tell me exactly what you think and feel on the perusal of anything, I may submit to you—for even if it be only your feelings, they will be valuable to me far more indeed than those criticisms in which the feeling is not stated, and mere objections made, which being weak have in

¹ "De Quincey indeed bore a roving commission to buy for Coleridge rare and valuable books of many kinds." A. H. Japp, *op. cit.*, i. 135.

one or 2 instances prevented my perception of real defects which I should soon have discovered if it had been said to me, there is something amiss in this ! I feel it—perhaps, it may be so and so—perhaps not ; but something I feel amiss. God bless you ! Be assured of my unfeigned esteem.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

When I am tolerably recovered, in case of no relapse, I will on the first opportunity make the Party, we spoke of.

LETTER 187

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. After completing his lectures in London (June, 1808) Coleridge had visited the Clarksons at Bury St. Edmunds, and arrived at Keswick "almost half as big as the house" on September 9, 1808. (Cf. *Life*, 170. Campbell quotes this from a letter of Southey's of this date, but no such letter appears in either of the volumes of Southey's letters.) Southey goes on to say that Coleridge is to leave with Wordsworth for Grasmere. As Coleridge says, "We all three arrived safe" [Coleridge, little Sara and Wordsworth], this letter must have been written early in September 1808.]

*Allan Bank, Grasmere,
Friday Night, [September,] 1808.*

MY DEAR SARA

We arrived all three safe. O it was a perfect comedy to see little John¹ on Sara's entrance. He had screamed with Joy on seeing us come up the field ; but when Sara entered he ran and crept under the kitchen-table, then peeped out at her, then all red with Blushes crept back again, laughing half-convulsively yet faintly—at length he came out and throwing his pinafore over his face and with both hands upon that, he ran and kissed her thro' the pinafore— Soon however all was agreed— John has put the Question, and Sara has consented—But (says she) is the Church a far way off ? Nay, replies John—nought but a little bit, and I'll carry you on my back all the way, and all the way back, after we are married. Sara sleeps with me.

¹ John, Wordsworth's eldest son, born June 18, 1803.

She has made the children as happy as happy can be—Every one is delighted with her, indeed it is absolutely impossible that there can be a sweeter or a sweetlier behaved child. This is not my speech ; but Wordsworth's. Little John absolutely dotes on her ; and she is very fond of him, and very good to all of them. O she has the sweetest Tongue in the world—she talks by the hour to me in bed—and does not at all disturb me in the night. She lies so quiet. Little Catharine¹ is a fine baby, and the Mother continues well. Dorothy just came in now to say, she was about to write to you : but finding that I am writing, she will defer it to the next carrier— O pray remember to send my bonny red Razor case, which I left in the room where William slept :²

I am now well again, and have been at work and in good spirits.

Be assured, my dear Sara ! that your kind behavior has made a deep impression on my mind—would to God it had been always so on both sides—but the Past is past, and my business is to recover the Tone of my constitution if possible and to get money for you and our children. I trust, I shall never wilfully do any thing to give you the least pain. Heaven knows ! nothing is more at my Heart than to be conducive to your comfort of mind, body, and estate—for you mistake greatly, if you imagine I do not entertain both affection and a very great esteem for you— May God bless us both.

When you have received an answer from Miss Nevins,³ pray let me know— Mary's confinement has prevented my

¹ Catherine Wordsworth was born Sept. 6, 1808 and died June 4, 1812.

² The omitted passage refers to a temporary illness, occasioned by insufficient clothing.

³ In answer to an invitation to Miss Eliza Nevins to visit the Coleridges at Keswick. " Samuel Taylor Coleridge paid a visit to my grandfather, Pim Nevins of Leeds, in the Summer of 1808. Hearing that Miss Eliza Nevins (my mother) was about to visit some relatives at Kendal, Coleridge invited her to extend her visit to Keswick, where the Coleridges and Southseys were living together at Greta Hall." Note by Eliza Nevins' son.

seeing Mr. Dawes¹ hitherto— Pray send me a good lot of books by each carrier—no odds, with what you begin as many each time as you conveniently can—and lastly the shelves.

Little Sara is gone to bed ; but left with me her “ loving kind dutiful Love to dear Mama, and to Dervy dear, and Hartley tho’ he is sic a wet kisser ; and to Edith ”—she told me last night, that Edith and she tell each other a deal of knowledge—and verily Sara is a deal cleverer than I supposed. She is indeed a very sweet unblameable Darling—and what elegance of Form and Motion—her dear eyes too ! as I was telling a most wild story to her and John her large eyes grew almost as large again with wonderment—

Remember me affectionately to Southey and believe me my dear Sara

Your affectionate Husband

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Be pleased to send me a box of wafers : and give my love to my dearest Hartley and my own *my soul*, my Derwent. O bless them both.

LETTER 188

To MISS ELIZA NEVINS, *Mr. J. Wilson’s, Kendal.*

[From the original letter in the possession of Canon W. C. Compton, who kindly sent me a transcript. Published, *New Church Magazine*, x. 356, (1891).]

Allan Bank, Grasmere,

Friday Morning, [September 16, 1808.]

DEAR MISS ELIZA

I have just received the kind note you returned in answer to my wife’s letter—and tho’ doubtless she will herself have answered it, I cannot be easy without expressing how much pleasure both I and those dearest to me feel in the prospect of your visit. First then, let me say, that my Wife and the family at Keswick are equally prepared *at all times*

¹ The Rev. John Dawes, who was soon to be Hartley’s and Derwent’s schoolmaster.

to welcome you—whatever day were most convenient to you, would be most pleasing to her—but a literary engagement, involving a small tour on the Duddon, compels me to be absent from Keswick till Friday next with my *honored* Friend, Mr. Wordsworth. Unfortunately I am unable to drive any other Horse, than Pegasus : so that I have no other means of coming into Kendal and returning with you to Keswick but by Post Chaises. Independent of this, there are two modes practicable perhaps—the first, that of my meeting you at Penrith, to which place there is a daily Coach from Kendal ; and thence to Keswick in a Chaise, which is but 18 miles—unless you would find it pleasanter to pass one day and night at the House of a Family, amiable friends of ours, at Penrith, during which time I would accompany you to Ullswater, the grandest of our Lakes, and where likewise I have some female Friends, who occupy the House at the bottom of the Lake, built and formerly occupied by Thomas Clarkson—and the next day we might go in the Coach from Penrith to Keswick—or if Mr. J. Wilson¹ could drive you over to Grasmere, both he and you would find there House-room and Heart-room ; we might then see the beauties of this most beautiful of all Vales under Heaven first ; and it's greatest beauties are quite unknown to the Herd of Tourists—and then after a few days sojourn in this dear House, we shall have plenty of opportunities of going to Keswick, either by Chaise, open Carriage, or Horse-back, as you like best. Mrs. Wordsworth has been recently confined ; but is so well already, as to sit down stairs, tho' her little Catharine saw the Light only the Tuesday before last—that this is no objection—and she, her sister, and Mr. and Miss Wordsworth will be as happy in your society, as myself, I dare acquit myself of all partiality, tho' I affirm, that there does

¹ John Wilson (Professor North, 1785-1854) lived part of the time at Elleray on Lake Windermere. His powerful personality no less than his many contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine*, gives him a permanent place among the romantic writers. Wilson later became a sort of guardian angel for Hartley Coleridge, enducing him, almost by physical force, to produce more than one contribution for *Blackwoods*. See *Christopher North : a Memoir of John Wilson*, Mrs. Gordon, 1862.

not exist a family in the Island better worth your acquaintance, if simplicity, delicacy, purity of mind, affectionateness, and good sense are of any value in this money-making Planet of ours !

As I hope we shall detain you among us some weeks, I deem it premature to plan any thing about your return—of course, I shall be your guide. The weather is now settling ; and the fern changing it's green for golden Hues is the *Harbinger* of our autumnal *splendors*. On my return to Keswick next Friday I shall of course know from Mrs. Coleridge, what Plan you deem the best—unless I should find you there. At all events, coming or returning, you must see Grasmere, and go back to Leeds in love with it.

When you write to your Father, will you be so good as to request him to send for me to Sheffield for two sets of Razors from Wass, the one the Seven shilling Case, the other the 13 or 14 Shilling one. He is the Inventor, grinding them on a four Inch Stone. I beg this on the Supposition that he means to visit Kendal in order to convey you home—when I shall contrive to see him, even if I cannot induce him to pass a few days with me—and can then repay him the cost.

If Mrs. Wilson can leave her Household, I need not say, I should consider it an additional gratification.

Pray, remember me with respectful affection to your Sisters, whenever you write : and believe me to be,

dear Miss Eliza,

very sincerely your obliged Friend

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 189

To MRS. S. T. COLERIDGE, *Greta Hall, Keswick.*

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. A few lines published, *Coleridge and His Son*, E. L. Griggs, *Studies in Philology*, Vol. xxvii, No. 4 (Oct. 1930).]

[*Autumn*, 1808.]

MY DEAR SARA

Miss Hutchinson, indeed, I believe all of us wrote to you last week and informed you of the safe arrival of the 10^l and that it was disposed of for paper— Mr. John Monkhouse¹ arrived on Wednesday Night, with a frightful cut on his chin and (we suspect) a fractured jaw, from his horse's hoof, as he was walking beside his horse between this house and the Blacksmith's shop. He is going on well—wonderfully so—but it will confine him a fortnight at least. Hartley and Derwent² came to the ball on Friday night, and returned on Saturday morning, to be at some balloon sport etc.—at Mr. Lloyd's. They go on better. Mr. De Quincey asked Hartley, if they had quarrelled for the last week—“Why we had one rather violent difference—it was a dispute between Derwent and me on the present state of Agriculture in France. I am very sorry for it, but indeed Derwent is very tyrannical in his arguing!!” The stumpy Canary!! Venerable State Economists! What a strange world we live in! and what a quaint brace of Doglets these striplings of our's are! And like Darran too so childish and simple even *under* his age! Did you ever tell the story of his grave correcting of me about the reptiles etc., preserved by Noah? O yes, indeed, Father! there were; there was a grasshopper in the ark. I saw it myself very often. I remember it very well! O there is a treasure in this anecdote for a man disposed to examine into the real state of what is called *Belief* in Religion!

I am not well—more than usually weak and languid—but it lies most in my spirits. I do my best to fight up against

¹ A partner of Sara Hutchinson's brother, in a farming concern in Wales. (Cf. *Memorials of Coleorton*, W. Knight, 1887, II. 110.)

² Now at school at Ambleside under the care of the Rev. John Dawes.

them ; but indeed bad spirits are a heavier affliction than folks in general suppose.

Pray give my kind love to Southey, and tell him, that I am sticking in the mire for the want of the Annual Register, or some equivalent work of the kind for the year 1800. Indeed I wish very much to see the volumes from the first treacherous delivery of Valletta [Malta] to Buonaparte, to the recommencement of the war after the Peace of Amiens—i.e. I imagine, from 1798 to 1802 inclusive, but I absolutely want the volume which contains the delivery of the Island to the British—a nice little prelude to the Cintra Convention in respect of principles and honesty. If therefore S. have these *desideratissima* he will be so good as to let me have them by return of Carrier : and he may rely on receiving them back, spank and spotless, on the same day of next week.

I was delighted with Sariola's Kalligraphical Initiation and I long to kiss her. As soon as ever I can look a fortnight in the face, i.e. have 2 or 3 numbers before hand, and then comes a fit of pleasant weather, I will unrust my toes and perform a walk to Greta Hall.

I give my best wishes to Robert Lovell ; and should be most happy to do anything better that is in my power—by sharing any expences, as soon as ever my chin is above water in the Friend Line.

Love to all, and kisses, if he will let you, to that darling little Rotundello,¹ whom I more often think of than of any of his sort and standing in Christendom ! he is indeed a very, a remarkably engaging child—

Yours faithfully and affectionately

S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ " Little Herbert Southey, who died at 10 years old." Note in Mrs. S. T. C.'s hand.

LETTER 190

To FRANCIS JEFFREY, *Queen's Street, Edinburgh.*

[Original letter, Library of Owen D. Young.]

Grasmere, Kendal.

[*Postmark, Nov. 10, 1808.*]

DEAR SIR

An unfinished Letter to you is now lying before me—and till the Hurry of writing Requests to all my acquaintances is over, I cannot collect my mind sufficiently to say all to you, that I have to say. I would, I could have your society for an evening—For the London Clocks did not more remind me, when I have been listening to count the Hour, of the “*Inopem me Copia fecit,*” than my proposed Chapter of Contents when I have resolved to repay your late attentions.

I have taken the liberty of sending you a small parcel of Prospectuses, intreating you to disperse them as favorably, as you can, for me.¹ I have received promises of contribution from respectable men; and I shall myself play off my whole Head and Heart, such as they are, in this work, as from the main pipe of the Fountain. Indeed, it is high Time. Hitherto, I have layed my Eggs with Ostrich Carelessness and Ostrich Oblivion—the greater part indeed have been crushed under foot; but some have crawled into light to furnish Feathers for other men's Caps, and not a few to plume the shafts of the Quivers of my Calumniators.

I cannot flatter myself, that the whole Structure of my Philosophy, speculative and moral, will be deemed of legitimate architecture by you; but to a man of robust and active Intellect there is a charm in that Diversity of Opinion with unity of purpose, which constitute the *Discordia*

¹ Coleridge here refers to the *Prospectus of the Friend, A Weekly Essay, by S. T. Coleridge*. (Extracted from a Letter to a Correspondent.) The first set of prospectuses was printed at Kendal in the late autumn of 1808; a second, with certain alterations, was printed in London early in 1809; and the third, which was attached to the first Number of the *Friend*, on June 1, 1809, was printed at Penrith. (See *Letters*, ii. 542 note.)

In his answer Jeffrey suggested that certain changes be made in the Prospectus; and Coleridge altered the later copies in accordance with Jeffrey's suggestions. Cf. *Letters*, ii. 536 note.

Concors of the literary World. "Ad haec (says one of my great Favorites, Giordano Bruno) quaeso vos, qualiacunque primo videantur aspectu, attendite: ut qui vobis forsan insanire videar, saltem quibus insaniam rationibus, cognoscatis."

Within 8 days I shall trouble you with a *Letter* for this I ought perhaps (without meaning a German Pun) to style a Brief. In the mean time,

dear Sir!

I am, with great respect

Your obliged

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 191

To THOMAS POOLE, *Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somerset.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Published in part, *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, ii. 226-228. This letter follows a long silence between Poole and Coleridge. Coleridge was apparently calling on all his friends, past and present, to aid him in selling the *Friend*. In order to avoid publishers' and booksellers' profits, Coleridge unfortunately determined himself to publish and distribute the *Friend*.]

Grasmere, Kendal, December 4, 1808.

MY DEAR POOLE

I will make a covenant with you. Begin to count my life, as a Friend of your's, from 1st January 1809. I think this is not unfair: for if I ask on the one hand an amnesty for all my *omissions* towards you (for I cannot charge myself with any positive acts of wrong), yet, on the other I abandon all claim on your remembrance of my never fluctuating love and esteem of you, and zeal to see the whole man of God and his country developed in you.

In truth, I have been for years almost a paralytic in mind from self-dissatisfaction—brooding in secret anguish over what from so many baffled agonies of effort I had thought and felt to be inevitable, but which yet from moral cowardice and a strange tyrannous Reluctance to make any painful concern of my own the subject of discourse—a reluctance strong in exact proportion to my esteem and affection for the

persons, with whom I am communing—I had never authorized my conscience to pronounce inevitable by submitting my case, carefully and faithfully, to some physician. I have however done it at last and the result, after a severe Trial, proved what I had anticipated ; yet such is the blessedness of walking altogether in light, that my health and spirits are better [than] I have known them for years. But of all this hereafter.

I have ordered some Prospectuses to be sent to you ; I earnestly intreat you, to do me what good you can. O, I should be made for ever if *you* would exert for me and this work one fourth of the zeal, with which you acted for our friend Ackland, [at an election]. (By the bye, send him a Prospectus. But nay I will send one myself.) I have received promises of contribution from many tall fellows of sounding names in this world of Scribes and Scribelings—and even among the Pharisees I have Favourers—I shall have two or 3 Bishops. Can you not get me Dr. Fisher¹ and Majendie.² I promise you on my honor, that it “ The Friend ” shall be the main Pipe, thro’ which I shall play off the whole reservoir of my collected knowledge and of what you are pleased to believe Genius. It is indeed Time to be doing something for myself. Hitherto I have layed my Eggs with Ostrich carelessness and Ostrich Oblivion—Most of them indeed have been crushed underfoot—yet not a few have crawled forth into Light to furnish Feathers for the Caps of others, and some too to plume the shafts in the Quivers of my Enemies. My first Essay (and what will be at the *bottom* of all the rest) is—on the nature and importance of Principles. What a beggarly thing your calculating Prudence is without high general Principles, we have lately seen in that confluent Small-pox of Infamy, the Cintra Convention—on which Wordsworth has nearly finished a most eloquent and well-

¹ Coleridge probably refers to John Fisher (1748-1825) one time tutor to Prince Edward (father of Queen Victoria) and from 1793-1797 the Vicar of Stowey.

² Henry William Majendie (1754-1830), bishop of Chester and Bangor, was from 1790 to 1793 vicar of Stowey, where he became a close friend of Thomas Poole's.

reasoned Pamphlet¹— Landor could not stay in Spain—he was so cut at heart by the Questions and remarks of the Spaniards, who, he says, are the noblest People on Earth, and will finally succeed in spite of their allies. He is come home to fight our late Envoy, who said in French in his presence—“He is a fool (un fou) and does not possess the money, he is offering.” What a state we are in! The People (not the Populace) striving and heaving with an unwonted Sense of Right and Wrong; but no one to form a Channel for their Feelings—no one to retain, steady, and direct them. The ministers absolute menials of the King—the D. of Y., of K., of Cambridge and the King himself the actual great State-Agents—and not a shadow of responsibility in them or their Tool. Yet the Dread, Ministers manifest of Parliament, and their Dislike to it—venal as it is—is a datum of Hopes. Three Commanders in Chief in as many days, two of them cowards, and one of those Two an Idiot to boot—and yet no calling to account—no examination into the source of the appointments. And in the Court of Enquiry, the infamous Terms never made ground of one Quest—but the grave Query is put, over and over again—Did not the allowing the . . . [?] . . . to go out of Portugal, allow the French to go out of Portugal? The [answer] is—Sir, you were sent to deliver Portugal from the French—what evidence of his [having] delivered the French out of Portugal.

I have translated Palm's Work² (rather that for which

¹ Wordsworth's prose work, *Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal to each other, and to the Common Enemy at this Crisis, and especially as affected by the Convention of Cintra*, appeared in 1809, having been seen through the press by De Quincey.

Coleridge's interest in the Spanish Question was later shown in his eight *Letters on the Spaniards*, contributed to the *Courier* from December 7, 1809 to January 20, 1810. (See *Essays on His Own Times*, 1850, ii. 593-676.) They were intended as a kind of supplement to Wordsworth's *Convention of Cintra*. (Cf. *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 142 note.)

² “Of the translation of Palm's, *Deutschland in seiner tiefsten Erniedrigung*, I know nothing. The author, John Philip Palm, a Nuremberg bookseller, was shot August 26, 1806, in consequence of the publication of the work, which reflected unfavorably on the conduct and career of Napoleon.” *Letters*, 530 n.

poor Palm was shot by a military Commission by order of Napoleon)—It is most masterly. It was sent me by the D. of Sussex—but the Bookseller is trifling with me. It contains a distinct prophecy of the Spanish Revolution—

My love to Ward. He will do what he can for me. Hereafter I will be a better correspondent—Indeed, indeed I have never been at ease with myself without instantly wishing for a nearer communion with you—for as you were my first Friend, in the higher sense of the word, so must you for ever be among my very dearest.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

[The following note Coleridge appended to the Prospectus of the *Friend* which was enclosed with the above letter.]

Should there be so many scattered Subscribers, that the large Number of separate Places should make up for the few Subscribers in each, *The Friend* will then be stamped and sent by the Post, as Newspapers—being printed on one Sheet, but on a Paper of larger size, and with 40 lines in each Page instead of 35, so that the quantity of matter will remain the same. But if the List of Subscribers shall have been furnished chiefly by the greater cities and Towns, the Essays will then be forwarded by every Saturday's Mail from London in a Coach-parcel to some Friend or Bookseller in each place.

LETTER 192

To HUMPHRY DAVY, *R. Institution, Albemarle St., London.*

[Original letter, Royal Institution. Published in part, *Fragmentary Remains of Humphry Davy*, 101-103.]

Grasmere, Kendal.

Wednesday, December 7, 1808.

MY DEAR DAVY

I wrote ten days ago to Mr. Savage ; ¹ requesting him, if he continued in his former purpose and agreement respecting the Printing and Publishing of a weekly Essay, to

¹ Mr. Savage at first undertook to print the *Friend*, and actually did run off a number of the *Prospectuses* ; later however Coleridge had some misunderstanding with him and the printing of the *Friend* was entrusted to Mr. Brown of Penrith, with the understanding that Coleridge should purchase a new fount of type.

print a thousand or more of these Prospectuses, adding his own name and address, as the Publisher, and sending certain numbers to certain places (of which I gave the list) to dispose of the rest according to his own Judgment. Being ignorant of his proper address, I directed my letter to the R. Institution. I twice urged him to return me a few lines by return of Post—which I should then have received on Thursday morning last—a week tomorrow. In the meantime I have written to a number of Friends, and Wordsworth and Southey their's—informing them that they would receive from London such and such numbers of the Prospectus—to all, who live in the middle or South of England—for to the North and to Scotland they have been sent from Kendal. If there be a designed Neglect, whatever the motive, it is unkind : if it be accident, it is unlucky. For I do not know what to do—My best way, I think, is to write to Mr. Stuart or Street,¹ and by him to find out Mr. Savage's Home, which cannot be far from Exeter Change—and if he decline the affair, to have the Prospectuses printed elsewhere and sent off—as before intended—as soon as possible. I have no other anxiety than to have *some* answer from him : whether yea or nay is something less than a matter of Indifference to me. It might be of considerable service to me indeed, if a Prospectus were put up in the passage of the Lecture-Theatre of the R.I., and in the Reading Rooms—and to this Indulgence I have perhaps some *claim*.

My health and Spirits are improved beyond my boldest Hopes. A very painful Effort of moral Courage has been remunerated by Tranquillity—by Ease from the Sting of Self-disapprobation. I have done more for the last 10 weeks than I had done for three years before. Among other things I wrote what the few persons, who saw it, thought a spirited and close reasoned letter to Mr. Jeffery² respecting

¹ Editor of the *Courier*.

² Coleridge makes no mention of this matter in a letter written to Jeffrey on December 14, 1808 ; nor is the matter mentioned elsewhere. For the review, see *Edinburgh Review*, xii, 394. The opening paragraph discredits the discoveries of Davy on the *Phenomena of Chemical Changes produced by Electricity*.

the introductory Paragraph of the Ed. Review of your Paper ; but I was earnestly dissuaded from sending it, as from an act of undeserved Respect—as from too great a Condescension even on my part—and 2ndly (and which was of more weight with me) as an act involving you more or less, whatever I might say, and likely to be attributed to your instigation, direct or indirect—as it is not unknown, that I have been on terms of Intimacy with you. Yet I own, I should be sorry to have it lost—as I think it is the most eloquent and manly composition, I ever produced. If you think it worth the Postage, it shall be transcribed—and I will send you the original. The Passage in question was the grossest and most disgusting *Keck-up* of Envy, that has deformed even the E.R. Had the Author had the Truth before his Eyes, and purposely written in diametrical opposition, he could not have succeeded better. It is high Time, that the spear of Ithuriel should touch this Toad at the ear of the public.

I would willingly inform you of my chance of success in obtaining a sufficient number of Subscribers, so as to justify me prudentially in commencing the work [the *Friend*] ; but I do not at present possess grounds even for a sane Conjecture. It will depend in a great measure on the zeal of my Friends, on which, I confess not without some Remorse, I have more often cast water than oil. Here a Conceit about the Greek Fire might come in ; but the simile is somewhat *tritival*.

Wordsworth has nearly finished a series of masterly Essays on our late and present Relations to Portugal and Spain. Southey is sending to the Press his History of Brazil,¹ and at the same Time (the Indefatigable !) composing a defence of religious Missions to the East, etc. Excepting the Introduction (which however I have heard highly praised, but myself think it shallow, flippant, and *ipse dixitish*), I have read few books with such deep Interest, as the Chronicle of the Cid.² The whole Scene in the Cortes is superior to any equal Part of any Epic Poem, save the Paradise Lost—*me*

¹ Southey's *History of Brazil*, published 1810-1819.

² Southey's *Chronicle of the Cid* was published by Longman in 1808.

saltem judice. The deep, glowing, yet ever self-controlled passion of the Cid—his austere Dignity so finely harmonizing with his Pride of loyal Humility—the address to his Swords—and the Burst of contemptuous Rage in his final charge and address to the Infantes of Carrion—and his immediate Recall of his mind—are beyond all ordinary Praises. It delights me to be able to speak thus of a work of Southey's ! I am so often forced to quarrel with his want of Judgment and his unthinkingness—which, Heaven knows, I never do without pain and the vexation of a disappointed Wish. But I am encroaching on time more valuable than my own—and I too have enough to do. May God grant you Health and the continuance of your intellectual vigor !

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 193

To PYM NEVINS.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge.]

[December, 1808.]

[Written on a Prospectus of the Friend.]

DEAR SIR

You will excuse me for inclosing what I understand is the price of the two sets of Razors, with thanks for your kindness in procuring them for me. I would you had been the Bearer ! In the honest overflowings of welcome my Friends would have convinced you, that the kindnesses shewn by you to me were felt as kindnesses shewn to themselves. I would have gladly accepted the Razors as a present and valued keepsake from you ; if I had not *written requesting* you to procure them for me. And you, who are all generosity, and who (surely you will not suspect me of the baseness and *filth* of intentional flattery) have woven into one web a Gentleman's delicacy and a Quaker's honesty—you will *understand* that if I accepted this kindness, I should never dare hereafter trouble a friend or an acquaintance with any little commission, lest my request should be interpreted as a hint for a *Present*—an artifice of decorous Mendicancy.

Again let me express my wish to see you at my Table, and under my Roof. After a week I dare promise myself there would never take place any Pros or Cons between us in things of this sort. Now, dear Sir ! for a few words on an affair of some importance to me. The Person, who was to have been the Printer and Publisher of my Essay in London, made an atrocious attempt to trap me into an agreement that must have enslaved and ruined me.¹ He had seen me often in town ; and from my apparent contempt of money in my proceedings with the R. Institution formed an overweening opinion of my simplicity and ignorance of the world. I rejected his infamous proposals, made as if I had forgotten the terms he had agreed to in the presence of the Bishop of Durham, Mr. Bernard (the beneficent and stirring friend of the Poor) and the celebrated Davy. But the whole of the Iniquity I did not perceive till it was unveiled to me by a man of the most consummate knowledge of the world, managed by a thorough strong and sound judgement, and rendered innocuous by a good heart—indeed the wisest, most disinterested and constant Friend I was ever blest with. He had himself made a very large fortune as Proprietor and Editor of a Paper—and at once saw and layed open the whole villainous scheme. The consequence is a necessary delay of the Publication. I hope, however, that the second week in February will be the latest. Now for the work itself. If you will have the goodness to re-peruse the Prospectus (and

¹ Coleridge had apparently taken for granted that Savage was to publish the *Friend* at a five per cent. commission, Coleridge, of course, assuming the expense. Savage understood differently and his letter of Dec. 7, 1808, of which I give a portion, seems to have struck Coleridge as unreasonable : “ In the last conversation which I had with you on this subject it was agreed, if my recollection be correct, that the Copyright of the work should be your property, that I should take the risk of the publication ; that is defray the expenses of the printing, paper and advertizing, and be repaid out of the first proceeds of the sale ; and then the profits to be equally divided between us ; I having always the printing and publishing of the work ; and the power of printing it in different sizes in any subsequent editions . . . always understanding that the expenses attending these editions will be borne by me and that I shall be repaid, as in the first instance, out of the first receipts of the sale of such edition, and then the profits equally divided between us.” (From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge).

the copies to be printed in London, which will be as four to one compared with the few printed at Kendal, will be so corrected) I have no doubt as to the religious tendency of the work. An article which I was induced to omit as seeming to announce controversy, which of all evils next to falsehood I wish to avoid, was on the necessary Transition of sincere national Religion or Religion of Reason into a sense of the necessity of Grace or an internal Voice and Guide—illustrated by Socrates, M. Antonine etc. This however being to me a foundation-stone, I will not and dare not omit it in the Work itself; altho' I shall cautiously avoid all peculiar sectarian phraseology. I mention this; because I was shocked by a Letter from an amiable Quaker, having these words "I understand, thou dost not believe the reality of an internal monitor"—Would, O would! that my whole Being were as clear in listening to and obeying that voice within, as my Convictions are clear in its existence and divine Nature. In several points I disagree with the present Quakers, and would fain tell them so if a more suitable occasion presented itself than that of the present work which is addressed to *all* men. But when I tell my mind concerning what I deem the errors in belief or practice that seem to exist in your society, I would write to do it in a private work circulated only among the Fathers of Families. I have likewise omitted the line containing the words "Dress and Dancing" for fear of offence—tho' I was alluding wholly to the Decorations and scientific Pantomimes of the ancient Greeks. It were, indeed, ridiculous to suppose that the Hopping up and down of a modern Ball-room, or the Paints, Patelies and Periwigs of a modern Toilet could have principles common to them with Gardening, and Poetry. I should be glad to hear from you and of you and your family.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. The Act of Subscription binds to nothing. I understand it only as a determination to encourage the work, if it should be found worthy of encouragement; and for the purpose of making the Proof possible without serious Loss

to the author. But as the Stamp Duty is such, that that number of copies alone can be published of which the Sale is assured, it is requested and expected, that a fortnight's notice will be given to the Publisher (whose name will be hereafter announced) of the intention to drop the work. After paying the Stamp Duty, the Publisher, and the Newsman, threepence halfpenny will remain to me of the shilling received ; out of which threepence halfpenny I have to pay all the expences of the Paper, the Printing, the Advertising etc—with all the contingent losses of neglect, fraud, bad debts and waste. I wish, this were known where the Price is objected to : and that it were moreover considered, that by religiously abstaining from all excitements of passion from personality and the events of the Day I give up beforehand three fourths of the English Readers of periodical Works. While—let the Truth of what I say screen me from the charge of speaking boastfully—instead of declaiming and railing on topics and large extracts furnished by the Morning Newspapers, instead of pouring out such a rude and vehement comment on the momentary Tidings or Measures, as an angry man might talk at his Breakfast-Table while reading a Newspaper hostile to his Party—I bring the results of a Life of constant study and intense Meditation, the Results of personal Toils and Travels, and of heavy unrepayed expences. O if money were my object, I could procure 50 Subscribers for one, if I chose to fight the battles of any particular Party. But to convey important Truth is my main object ; and I should scorn to receive for myself a single crown in the course of the year from any man, to whom I had not been honestly endeavouring to give knowledge and motive which cannot be bought or payed for with earthly coin, and the wish to seek from above those Impulses, which can be given only from above ; and of which all that the highest earthly eloquence can affect, is to convince the mind of its need : tho' I cannot give the medicine, yet I shall not have been useless if I have discovered the disease, and shewn the way to the Physician.

LETTER 194

To DANIEL STUART, *Courier Office, Strand, London.*

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 99-104. This letter bears no date, but it was probably written late in December, 1808.]

Sunday, Noon, [December, 1808.]

MY DEAR STUART

Tho' I trust as well as hope, that I shall receive a letter from you by to-night's post, yet we cannot get it till ten o'clock at night—and then only by walking to Rydale (three miles from our house), and can answer it so as to leave Kendal by the *Tuesday's* Post (for all Monday the Post loiters at Hawkshead) only by writing, as many lines as we can persuade the man to stay minutes, in the cottage at which he leaves the letters. We receive letters four times a week—the letters of one post on Tuesday, of one post on Wednesday, of one on Friday, and of three posts on Sunday night—so that a letter written from London on Friday reaches us as soon as one written on Wednesday or Thursday. Therefore if you are writing to us by *Wednesday's* Post, and could recollect to direct *that* letter to *Keswick* (Greta Hall) we should receive it by the Carrier with our Newspapers on Saturday instead of Sunday night—and save a day in the answering.

On the other side I have written (i.e. proposed) a short advertisement for the Newspapers:¹ leaving to you, if you approve of it, to fill up the Blanks. I have received half a dozen letters complaining of the non-receipt of the Prospectuses, in each of which is said—"I am sure I could have got 30—or 50—or 100 subscribers." But your information concerning the Stamp Office has sadly perplexed me—first of all, I had fully made up my mind to printing "*The Friend*" on *one sheet only*. Was the determination of the Stamp Office influenced by the proposal of printing it on one sheet and a quarter? Secondly, and of more importance,

¹ Stuart inserted advertisements of the *Friend* in the *Morning Post* and the *Courier*, gratis.

of the Subscribers hitherto procured (180) two thirds and more live scattered, or where booksellers' parcels do not come above once a month. If the Essay be not stamped, how can it be delivered to these? Would the Stamp Office *refuse* to stamp the Work, and so give it the privilege of being sent by the Post? Would they stamp a *given number*? I have reason to believe that either from Perceval or Lord Mulgrave I could procure any recommendation for any favor not illegal.

Monday night.

MY DEAR STUART

So far I had written, when Sara Hutchinson's Illness stopped me both by the necessary attendance on her and by the weight of my Spirits—and a heavy and continued Rain prevented any one's going to Rydale, so that I did not receive your letter till this evening. You will long ere this (on Friday morning, I calculate) have received Wordsworth's second Essay,¹ re-written by me, and in some parts re-composed—I have twice read your letter, and have nothing to reply, but that you are in possession of all the facts—the principal one, that of the 180 Subscribers already procured by far the greater part are not resident in great Towns. Do you therefore, dear and honored Friend! decide for me at once. Be assured, (from the very inmost of my heart I say it) as beforehand I have no other feeling but that of perfect confidence, so in the retrospect I never shall or can have any other feelings than those of affection and gratitude. The tears are in my eyes, as I write, so that I can scarce see my paper— I would, I could convey to you as by intuition, how much I love and esteem you—

I dare say, I have erred in prematurely propagating my Prospectuses—the number however has been so small, that much Harm cannot have been done—and many persons have since written to me, asking me for them. When I entered on the plan, I resolved, and have since been employ-

¹ The first two portions of Wordsworth's *Convention of Cintra*, were published in the *Courier* in December 1808 and January 1809.

ing myself so as to enable myself to execute it, that the Printer should always have four numbers beforehand. Finally if it be not (as I suppose, it is not) practicable, to have 300 stamped (for I have every reason to believe, that I shall have that number of scattered Subscribers) and the others for London and the great cities unstamped, you will decide whether all or none—and according to your decision set the thing agoing, when and how you think proper.

Mr. Bernard has informed me that 60*£* will be paid to my order, as soon as a certain sum has been paid into the R.I.¹—this is at least 40*£* less, than was fair and due to me. I shall order it to be paid to you. I believe, I have not told you, in what a scoundrelly manner Meyers (the German Bookseller) has treated me with respect to Palm's Book. I had received advice from Mr. Hurst (Longman's Partner) that Meyers was a man not to be trusted in money concerns—I therefore wrote to him, a few weeks after my arrival that I was ready to go to the Press; and requested to know, on *what terms* he expected to receive the Copy—(not the Translation: for one third at least is of my own writing, and what is not, cost me line by line, three times the trouble of perfectly original composition). He returned no answer—and I have since been informed, has published the work translated by some one else. I am sure, I am not actuated by any vanity, when I declare my belief, that there are not five men in the Kingdom who could translate that work properly.

To return to "*The Friend*." There is certainly nothing in the Work, that could make the numbers more interesting this day than this day fortnight—But then the pleasure of being able to expect it's arrival on a given day, the difference of *one* arriving at a time, instead of *four shillings* at once, in all those places where Booksellers' parcels arrive monthly only, and the comfort of having a thing come as a newspaper, and with the newspapers, are great Influences. Would it be prudent or practicable to have the whole stamped *at first*, and then after 8 or 10 numbers to adopt the other plan, if a *great majority* of the Sale was found to be in London,

¹ Apparently *£*60 was still due to Coleridge for his lectures of 1808.

and the great cities? That passage in the *Espriella* of Southey,¹ which I so bitterly reprobated to you, has deprived me of at least a hundred Subscribers in Birmingham. Southey's Life would be in danger, were he in Birmingham and known to be there—

I feel and have not ceased to feel, *how much* I ask in asking you without any further reference to me to decide for me—My private friends living scattered or in small towns, and my subscribers hitherto having been procured by those friends, are doubtless no fair presumption of the nature of the sale in general— I have about twenty swelling names of Earls and Countesses and Bishops.² I write thus undigestedly, because a person is going off by day-break to-morrow to Keswick—and I save one post at least—God bless you and
S. T. C.

The very post by which your letter was received, Wordsworth sent the Essay and the answer to your Questions.

LETTER 195

To DANIEL STUART, 9 Upper Brompton Row, Knightsbridge,
London.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 128-131.]

[Postmark, February 18, 1809.]

DEAR STUART

Had I conceived Mr. Clarkson's Business to have extended beyond the matter of Subscribers and Prospectuses, he is the last man, God bless him ! with whom I should have troubled you—for he has never more than one Thought in his brain at a time, let it be great or small—I have called him the moral Steam-Engine, or the Giant with one idea—Heaven knows ! how well I love, and how very highly I

¹ Coleridge refers to Southey's *Letters from England* by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella, translated from the Spanish, 1808, ii. 56-73, where there is a criticism of Birmingham.

² For a list of the original subscribers to the *Friend*, see *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 451-463.

revere him. He shall be my Friend, Exemplar, Saint—any thing only not my Counsellor in matters of Business. That I could not with credit appoint any one my Publisher but Longman, is more than ridiculous. “What’s Hecuba to him or He to Hecuba?” Save and except the translation of Schiller’s *Wallenstein*, done by me at Longman’s particular request, and printed and published contrary to my repeated Warnings and strenuous advice, and by which I earned about the tenth part of what the same Toil, Time, and Effort would have procured me from the *Morning Post* (setting private obligations and supererogatory payments out of the question), I have never once in my life touched Longman’s *Plutus*, or he my *Minerva*. Besides, it was and I trust, *is* to be a *Newspaper*. It would weary us both to repeat the weighty arguments which decided this point in both our Judgments—From the peculiar nature of the Work, and from the particular complexion of those who will form the best and perhaps the largest part of my Customers, there can be no other mode of circulating it every where and *weekly*, except by the *Post*—and to receive four at once (in many places 6 or 8) would destroy the very character of the publication. By that decision therefore, it having met with your concurrence and having been confirmed by unanswerable arguments adduced by you in addition to my own reasonings, I must abide. Besides, by 5 per cent. Longman means 5 per cent. in *addition* to the Trade profit, depend upon it. How could *he* supply the Subscribers, otherwise than by the Town and Country Booksellers—and each of them must have their profit. But were it otherwise, I should still remain by my resolution—even though I were obliged to defer the work, till Types could be procured from London. There are three plans possible— 1. To seek out a Printer and Publisher who will consent to give the legal Bonds in London, and to make the best Terms with him possible. If Mr. Clement will not do this, I think that George Ward would. 2. To have it printed at Penrith, where there is a very clever young—[sic]

[continued] 16 *February, Penrith.*

(I return to-morrow). While writing the last sentence, I received a letter from Penrith, that Brown was both able and willing to print and publish the *Friend*—in consequence on Sunday I walked from Grasmere over the mountains (O Heavens ! what a *Journey* !) hither, and arrived at last *limping*, having sprained my knee in leaping a Brook, and slipping on the opposite bank twisted my left leg outward—However, I am perfectly satisfied with Brown's character, proposals, and capability, and have accordingly agreed with him to be my Printer and Publisher—His name is Mr. John Brown, Printer and Stationer, Penrith. I have resolved to commence the Work on the first of April.

On your kindness, dear Friend, I must now call to find me out the proper paper, which should be of course very good, and the means of procuring it stamped. An Attorney (Antony Harrison) informed me that if I procured it from the Stamp Office, as a Newspaperist, I should have a drawback of 16 per cent—But of all these things I am ignorant—only I know to a certainty that both Ware (the Whitehaven Paper) and both the Carlisle Papers receive their stamped Paper from London directly—and I am advised, if it can be procured immediately, to have a considerable quantity sent by sea to Stockton, directed to Mr. John Hutchinson, with S. T. C. on the corner of the Box.

On what terms, payment, etc., it is to be procured, you will be so good as to inform me. I have written to Davy, requesting that the money due to me [from the Royal Institution] may be paid at your office to your name.

I never once dreamt of receiving any money beforehand—It must have been carelessness in my language which could have suggested this idea to you—What money may be necessary to carry on the work for the first 20 weeks, I doubt not, I shall be able to procure—I write in great pain from my knee which is very seriously injured—Such a passage you can have scarce a conception of, ice, half-frozen snow, floods, and the impossibility of remitting attention, nay,

anxiety, for a single step—I never paused once, except the few minutes I lay sprawling in torture—and yet was 5 hours in reaching Luff's House which is ten miles from Wordsworth's. However, I am at ease in mind—and in my next hope to give you some little proof of it.

I was pleased—a little flattered, perhaps, by your letter to Southey—it was almost verbally coincident with what I had written a few days before. May God bless you and your affectionately grateful,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 196

To MR. BROWN, *Penrith*.

[Original letter, South Kensington Museum. This letter is addressed to Mr. Brown of Penrith, who printed the *Friend*.]

April 4, 1809.

DEAR SIR

I have been uneasy from the hour I left you—and had hoped, that an acquaintance who meant to have passed thro' Penrith, but (it seems) did not, would have brought me word whether you had felt any ill consequences from your fall. I half feared, that I might appear inattentive in not pressing you, at Appleby, to take either wine or spirits and water; but indeed, my sole reason was that I believed, any stimulus might prove injurious to you, to whom perhaps blood-letting would have been adviseable, if any thing— But one thing I have blamed myself for, that I did not press you more, indeed insist, on your permitting me to procure some trusty person to take home the horse, yourself to return in the chaise with us— I was really uncomfortable, when it began to threaten snow or sleet— I hope, I need not desire you to do what ought to be a matter of course—that is, to place all your little expences for horse, etc., to my account. But I should be glad to hear from you, whether you feel yourself any worse for the accident. You will, I trust, in a day or two receive 1250 Stamped sheets—and as soon as they arrive, I shall procure an equal quantity of unstamped paper of the same

kind from Mr. Pennington ¹—and want to know from you, what *sort* of paper and what *quantity*, I ought to order from him for the wrappers. Likewise, I wish to know from you, 1. whether you have leisure to wrap up and direct and put into the Post Office, “The Friends,” weekly and 2. what you think reasonable per annum as the remuneration? I can easily procure some one to take the trouble, if you decline it; but think it right to apply to you first.

I suspect, Wilson has not used me well. How comes it that he charges 38, 13.0.? ² by what calculation? and why has he sent the old cut? as I shall put a Greek Grammar (which will be a large volume) and Greek and English Lexicon to your Press,³ as soon as ever the *Friend* is *pushed off* and at plain sailing I should like to know the real price of Greek Type, in quantity sufficient to print, per half sheet a work of which perhaps one fourth might be Greek characters?

Be so good as to give me a few lines, addressed to me at Greta Hall, Keswick, I am, dear Sir, with all respect your sincere and etc.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

P.S. Pray be so good as to send over a Lad to Pooley with a letter, and intrust him with a one pound note—it is to pay a little Bill, which I had left, meaning to return, I suppose, about ten shillings—and to bring back some books, and etc.

Russel will send the Bill, which I will repay you for by return of post. I left your Printers’ grammar with Mr. A. Harrison; apply for it, if it has not been returned.

¹ W. Pennington, who, after Coleridge disagreed with Savage, was chosen to print the *Friend*. He printed a number of prospectuses, but eventually refused to undertake the printing of the *Friend*.

² This is the sum which Coleridge paid out for the fount of type for the Printer.

³ These are entirely projected works. There is, however, extant the fragment of a Greek Grammar which Coleridge used to teach his boys Greek. This fragment of Coleridge’s Grammar was published by Derwent Coleridge (see *Poems* by Hartley Coleridge, 1851, ccix.-ccxviii.).

LETTER 197

To DANIEL STUART, 36 Upper Brompton Row, Knightsbridge, London.

[Original letter, British Museum. Privately printed in part, *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 144-148.]

Keswick, Saturday, April 15, 1809.

DEAR STUART

I am sorry to be forced to trouble you with a double postage in order to convey to you the enclosed Receipt. It would have been sent earlier ; but I was at Mr. Curwen's,¹ Workington Hall, when it arrived at Grasmere—and am just returned, and after 3 days examination of Mr. Curwen's great farm, and of Mr. Curwen's not very great mind, an unexpected Convert to Sir F. Burdett's opinions concerning the impropriety of the great Landholders devoting themselves to practical agriculture. This very moment I have received a striking proof, tho' in a trifling way, of the importance of a leading Paragraph. The Courier has not arrived half an hour, and yet 3 of the family, each unknown to the other, have come into my Study, exclaiming—"Have you seen the Courier? It has no leading Paragraph—why! there's nothing in the Paper." That I cannot assent to—for I was much struck with the proof, it contained of one of my old opinions—namely of the superiority of our naval commanders, as diplomatists, to our generals. The latter seem always to look forward to the time, when they shall be in the same situation with the capitulators ; and always shew far more fellow-feeling for the enemy, however bloody and rapacious, than for the oppressed or for the majesty of their country. The Sailors act like men with whom to be conquered is an unknown Thought, and who sacrifice their own pride and that of their country to no other claims than those of justice and common humanity. I was much amused with Mellish's speech at the Middlesex meeting.² Had I been present, I

¹ The entire issue of the *Friend* was franked by Curwen, the Member for Carlisle.

² "At a meeting of the Freeholders of Middlesex which was held at this time resolutions were passed commendatory of the action of Colonel Wardle, Sir Samuel Romilly, and others in recording their vote against the conduct of the Duke of York." *Letters from the Lake Poets*, 1889, 146 note.

would have quoted the following apposite passage from an obscure little Tract of the famous De Foe. "*Probability clear ; proof positive ; Circumstances concurring*—He that would not hang a Thief on these three Heads ought to be hang'd himself. He that will doubt after these three heads have been thus cleared up, will doubt for ever ; and must expect to have all men doubt both his own honesty and his understanding." It grieved me to see Wardle ¹ blending his yet transparent character with the muddy yet shallow stream of the Whig-club. If his own good sense and a moment's reflection on the necessary consequences of the infamous Fox and Grenville Ministry had not taught him, he might have learnt even from Cobbett, that the influence of parliamentary Parties is in it's evanescent state, in the mind of the English Nation ; and that [he] would be more trusted, and possess more real power, by attaching himself to the existing administration in all ordinary matters—and yet permit me to say, that your opinion of Mr. Canning is one of the very very few, in which my present convictions are different from your's. I never can think that statesman a great man, who, to defend a measure will assert—not once but repeatedly—that state-policy can not and ought not to be always regulated by morality.² I should not hesitate at the promise of proving the Danish Expedition strictly moral and in the true spirit of the Law of Nations. Curwen told me (but I place no great reliance on his opinions) that it was feared by many honest men in parliament (MANY !!) that Lord Howick hung off, and with Lord Grenville was pioneering a road to Power by the Duke of York and the King ; who is said to be highly offended with the present Ministers. Perhaps, Whitbread's Conduct is no presumption of Howick's opinions ; but surely, Wynne's is a pretty sure symptom of Lord Grenville's Bearing.

¹ It was Gwyllym Lloyd Wardle (1762-1833) who in the House of Commons attacked the Duke of York for irregularity in military appointments.

² George Canning (1770-1827) planned the seizure of the Danish Fleet. For Coleridge's discussion of the morality of this action see the *Friend*.

I should think that once at least more a short advertisement should be put in the Times, M. Chronicle, M. Post, the Courier, and the Star—each on a different day to this effect—On Saturday, the 7th of May will be published (to be continued weekly) No. 1 of the Friend, a literary, moral, and political Paper; but excluding personal and party politics, and the events of the Day, by S. T. Coleridge. Orders to be sent to—[sic] as before—etc., etc., etc.

When I say published, I mean it will appear in London, and in all other places equidistant from Penrith, on that day: for it will be sent from Penrith by Thursday's Post—but I did not know how to express it with brevity. It would be advantageous too to add, or to the principal Booksellers in each vicinity, who are requested to transmit the names by the 4th of May, if possible. If any names have been left at Clement's, he will be so good as to send them as soon as possible. I wish, I knew some person at Plymouth and Portsmouth who would interest themselves for me. The mode of paying the money will be announced in the first number. God grant, my dear Stuart! that I may live and have health to thank you for all the trouble, you have taken for me, in that way which will, I know, most gratify you, by going on resolutely and with honor to myself and friends. I am ever as affectionately as gratefully your obliged Friend,
S. T. COLERIDGE.

I return to Grasmere to-morrow.

LETTER 198

To GEORGE COLERIDGE.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. Coleridge had renewed correspondence with his brother in December, 1808.]

*Greta Hall, Keswick,
Tuesday Morning, April, 1809.*

MY DEAR BROTHER

I have this moment received your letter, being at Keswick for the purpose of answering letters by the post:

for at Grasmere we are often (including the receipt and the answer) from 7 to 10 days behind the regular post-towns. It was a great oversight in me not to have informed you that *The Friend* will be printed on stamped paper, in the same manner as the newspapers, with Bonds from myself, from my Printer and from my Publisher, and two securities besides a considerable sum, consequently it will be circulated throughout the Kingdom free of all expense, even as a franked letter. No agent is therefore absolutely needful or useful except as a place for persons to have their names, and others who would not take the trouble of sending them to me. For every number will come to the subscriber's house by the letter carrier of the place. In short in this respect (and I would fain hope, in this alone) *The Friend* is the very same sort of publication as Cobbett's Political Journal.¹ It will leave Penrith every Thursday morning, arrive in *London* every Saturday morning, and in all other places of the Kingdom, proportional to their distance.

I have been asked if it will be at all *political*. My answer has been—if by political be meant the events of the day, or discussions on the events of the day, or personalities, ministerial or anti-ministerial or *party* politics in any shape or disguise, *The Friend* will not be political, but if under "political" be included essays on Legislature, international morality and the virtues and vices that found or undermine the Well-being of nations, assuredly it will in that case be *political*; for my object is to draw the attention of my countrymen, as far as in me lies, from expedients and short sighted tho' quicksighted Experience, to that grand algebra of our moral nature, *Principle* and *Principles*—in public as in private life, in criticism, ethics and religion. For I have long had reason to suspect, that in times of old, the *Principles* were better than the men, but that now the men (faulty as they are) are better than their Principles.

But if I write 10 lines more I shall lose the Post. The first number will appear (in London) by May 14th *certainly*, but if the paper arrive this week, the 6 or the 7th. There has

¹ Cobbett's *Weekly Political Register* ran from 1802 until 1835.

been unfortunately a double delay, one at the Stamp Office, and a second in the waggon.

Each sheet of blank paper costs me fourpence half-penny. Add to this the expenses of Printing, Advertising, Agency, Waste and (above all) the great probable losses in the payments, and you will perceive that a shilling is the least, at which I could afford it—the very moral [excellence of] the plan precluding two thirds of the [profit made]¹ by periodical works, because excluding Personality and Bitterness and transient Curiosity.

With more enquiries in my heart (and these anxious ones) than I have either Spirits or time to make, I remain dear Brother

affectionately yours

S. T. COLERIDGE.

LETTER 199

To J. COLSON, *Clifton Wood, Bristol.*

[From a transcript of the original letter, kindly sent me by Mr. James Ross, the Librarian, Central Public Library, Bristol. The original letter was written on the blank leaves of a Prospectus of the *Friend*. This letter is but one of many that Coleridge wrote in an effort to procure subscribers to the *Friend*.]

[April, 1809.]

DEAR COLSON

The first number of *The Friend* will appear in London, Bristol, and places equi-distant from Penrith (where it is printed) on Saturday May 14th., at the latest—It's object is—by doing as much good as I can to do some service to my wife and children. If it succeed (i.e. if it sell 1,000) it will put 7 or 8 hundred each year, in my or rather my wife's pocket (for I never keep any *pounds* in my own) during it's publication. Therefore remember old times, dear Colson ! and do me what service you can, in gaining me names. For the names and addresses procured for me by my friends will just put all in my pocket that would, if subscribed at the booksellers, go into theirs—indeed it is quite a shame

¹ MS. torn.

that the booksellers should charge anything—For if the names are known, my directing them to the bookseller is an injury to the subscribers, inasmuch as they will have to *send* for that which otherwise would come to them as a franked letter. Therefore, dear Colson ! do what you can for me—Had you a bird's-eye view of my heart at this moment you would see that [it] is far more gratitude from remembrance of the *Watchman* working there, than hope or wish respecting *The Friend*. If you are asked if the paper is to be *political*, answer—if by political be meant the events of the day, or discussions thereon ; or personal attacks on defences of minister, or opposition—*No* ! But if by political be meant any investigation relating to the weal and woe of nations in general and of this nation in particular, from *national* conduct—Yes ! for the object of *The Friend* is to establish, elucidate, and recommend *principle* instead of *mere expedience*—and therefore *Principles* : principles in taste, (poetry, prose, painting, music, dress, etc., etc., etc.) *principles* in private morality—principles in general *religion*, as distinct from superstition, from enthusiasm, and from atheism, and commend all who have indeed a *religion*, in whatever section Principles in legislation, and the duties of legislators—especially principles for Englishmen, whether electors, or elected, governors or governed, adapted to the present awful times and relative to France—Mrs. Coleridge is well and looks younger every year—and my children are well, and going on well. By the bye, judging of your feelings by my own, I deem it will excite no unpleasurable smile in you if I transcribe one short sentence from the letter (received last night) from a friend, who called with me at your house when you were not at home—“ So much for what I think of her head and heart—as to her person,—I assure you, she is (in my eyes) the most beautiful woman, I ever saw, excepting Mrs. Colson—I mean, your Bristol friend's wife.” This sentence which I read aloud for the edification of our women, produced a long *discuss*, to my great amusement—who never in my life heard a woman's beauty admitted, without exception and subtraction by two women together, in my life time.

Any names of subscribers (which subscription does not imply the least promise of continuing the work for a single number, after the subscriber wishes to discontinue it) should be sent to me, S. T. Coleridge, Keswick, Cumberland—or Mr. Brown, Printer and bookseller, Penrith, *do*.

May God bless you, and all who [are] dear to you, and
S. T. COLERIDGE.

It will be stamped and registered as a weekly newspaper—rather say, it *has* been—consequently will be brought to the residence of each person ordering it, as a *franked* letter. Each sheet of blank stamped paper costs me 5 pence—add to this 1. The carriage from London to Penrith—2. The printing. 3. The accidental waste, where every sheet mispulled costs 5 pence. 4. The advertisements which are very heavy. 5. The unavoidable stops in the final payments. 6. Expenses etc. of agency (to avoid which as much as possible I write to you). 7. The nature of the work which excluding *personalities*, the events and politics of the day, precludes two thirds of the readers of a weekly paper—and then judge whether selling the same quantity at the same price with Cobbett, I do not sell it at a much lower rate—

LETTER 200

To THOMAS N. LONGMAN, *Paternoster Row*.

[From a transcript of the original letter made by E. H. Coleridge. This letter, which has neither date nor direction, must have been addressed to Longman. On June 6, 1809, Coleridge writes to Stuart: "I had just written to Longman, offering him the *Copy Rights* of the two Volumes of Poems. . . ." Unpublished letter, British Museum.]

Greta Hall, Keswick,
Thursday Night, [May, 1809.]

DEAR SIR

It gave me much concern, first that contrary to my direction some books belonging to you were sent hither from London among my own; and secondly, that after having been properly packed up for my friend, Mr. De Quincey, to take with him to town, they were, as I find, forgotten and

left behind. Immediately on my return to Grasmere (for I must remain here and at Penrith, till the first Number of "The Friend" has been sent off) they shall be additionally secured, and forwarded to you by the waggon, carriage paid—You will have seen by my Prospectus the general nature of my weekly paper, which will be circulated to those that order it, by the General Post, it having been registered etc., as a newspaper. It has been often asked, whether "The Friend" is to exclude *Politics* altogether? My answer is: If by Politics be meant the Events of the Day, Public Papers, or Discussions thereon, or attacks on or defences of particular measures, or particular men in or out of power, in short, personal and party politics, Yes! all these the Friend will exclude. But if the word "Political" be taken in it's wider sense, so as to include whatever relates to the public conduct of men and nations, I must answer, No! for the object of my Work is, as far as in me lies and in those who assist me, to draw the attention of the Country to Principle and Principles instead of mere Experience and *prudential* maxims in *everything*—in Literature in the fine Arts, in Morals, in religion, in Legislation, and in international Law. The first number will be sent from Penrith by Thursday's Post, May 12, so as to be in London and all places equi-distant on Saturday morning, 14 May.¹ Any service, you might find it in your power to render it, I need not say, will be acknowledged and remembered gratefully by me—

Ill-health, and still more the consequent morbid low-spirits amounting almost to despondency, joined to the unworthy Reception of Southey's *Madoc* and Wordsworth's Poems hung such a weight on every attempt I made to finish two Poems, four fifths of which had been written years ago,

¹ The publication of the *Friend* was still further delayed until June 1, 1809. It appeared at irregular intervals, and with the twenty-seventh number on March 15, 1810 it came to an end. "The continuity of issue was frequently broken—thus there were eight blank weeks between II and III; three between III and IV; one between XI and XII; one between XX and XXI; and one between XXVI and XXVII." (*Life*, 173 note.) The *Friend* was written mainly at Grasmere, with Sarah Hutchinson serving as Coleridge's amanuensis. The original manuscript is to be found in the Forster Library, South Kensington Museum.

that I at last gave up the Thought altogether. I once remarked there were Beauties and Excellencies enough in the very *worst* of Shakespere's Plays to ensure it's damnation had it appeared in the present age. Now it is most certain, that my poems do not contain either in kind or degree the qualities which make Wordsworth's poems so dear to me and many much greater men, and so repulsive to others. But it was enough that I am known to be the particular Friend both of Southey and Wordsworth to draw upon me the whole clamor of those who have waged war against them. I told Jeffrey that it was rather hard upon me, that for the poems, which I have published, I received the not-undeserved censure that my style was too highly ornamented, and deviating from simplicity by a too constant employment of the strongest words and boldest figures of Poetry. Even the *Ancient Mariner*, the only poem of any size that has appeared since—and that anonymously—was yet every where criticized in the Reviews, as "Laboriously beautiful"—and "overpolished in the diction with *Dutch Industry*"—and now for *no* poems at all but only for my acquaintanceships, I am abused in every Review and Magazine, in time and out of time for the *simple* and *puerile*: tho' it is a fact, that I was the very first person who commenced the attack on *Mock-simplicity* in the Sonnets (in one of the early monthly Magazines) signed Nehemiah Higginbottom.¹

I have however some reason to believe that Jeffrey is well inclined to make me the Amende honorable (at least, if I may believe his own letters)—These objections however are perhaps the offspring of Low-spirits in great measure.— But the alteration, I have made in the plan, I made from sober reflection—

The poems in my possession are of two sorts—1. Poems of such length that either of them with the necessary notes would make a small volume when completed—of these not a line has ever appeared in any form. 2. Poems all of which are completed, and corrected for the Press, the

¹ For these sonnets see *Poems*, 209-211; *Sonnets attempted in the manner of Contemporary Writers*.

longest of which is a thousand lines—a second, 700—the others from 300 to 10 lines—which altogether amount to four thousand lines, and printed as the last edition of my Poems would with the notes make near 400 pages— But of these 'tho' all are my own property, yet several have already appeared, tho' very different from their present form, in the Morning Post—these however are of small consequence from their minor size etc.—and the A. Mariner (which in any future Edition Wordsworth will withdraw from the L. Ballads, now sold out) in the L.B.

My wish therefore is to publish these, as a second in 2 and 3 volumes of *my* Poems—the first being “Poems written chiefly from the age of 17 to 25—the second—Poems from 25 to 33”,—and hereafter to publish whatever I may publish by the name of the particular Poem as “The Three Graves, a Sexton's Tale, by S.T.C.”—etc. Now as the first volume is your *property*,¹ I have no objection to dispose of the absolute Copyright of the second, or second and third (as with notes and critical preface it will make, as I find by accurate measurements, two volumes of the same size with the last Edition of the first) both for that reason, and in order that any defect of immediate novelty from the Ancient Mariner having past thro' several Editions in the L.B. (for the same objection scarcely applies to those that have appeared occasionally and often without my knowledge in different channels and at very distant dates) may be fully counterbalanced by the certainty of the whole advantage (whatever that may chance to be) derived from any present or future reputation, that I may chance to obtain. It shall be at your own command on which day the Poems shall be put to the Press, and within what time completed—only it is my particular wish, that they should be printed under my own eye by Brown, of Penrith, and the difference in the *Price* will nearly pay the carriage to London if not wholly. He prints excellently, and his Type is quite new from Wilson, of Glasgow.

For the copy-right I ask 120£. Brown could begin any

¹ Longman had published the third edition of Coleridge's *Poems* in 1803.

day after May 21st.¹ When you write, be so good as to send my account for Books etc. Mr. Southey's little Boy the night before last had an attack of the Croup ; but thank Heaven ! by instant Bleeding at the Jugular, and a blister on the Throat, the Danger seems past.

Respectfully, dear Sir,
S. T. COLERIDGE.

¹ In spite of these elaborate plans, Coleridge did not publish a collection of poems until 1817.

